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*The Distinctive Features
of an Italian State*



Edited by

ANDREA GAMBERINI

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A Companion to Late Medieval and Early Modern Milan

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The Distinctive Features of an Italian State

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Andrea Gamberini



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² Federico and Theresa Federici translated the chapters by Albini, Del Tredici, Di Filippo, Maifreda, Morandotti, Tonelli, and Zaggia.

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Introduction

Between Continuity and Discontinuity: In Search of the Original Characteristics of the State of Milan

Andrea Gamberini

In accordance with the editorial policy of the series “Brill’s Companions to European History”, this volume, first and foremost, answers the requirement to make accessible to a wide public an historical synthesis which is both fully informative and reflects the current historiographical debate. The collaboration of authors who are truly authorities in their respective fields of research, and the effort they have made to communicate their knowledge, are aimed at meeting the needs of readers who are educated and interested, but not necessarily expert in the history of Lombardy. Nevertheless, both the particular chronological and spatial framework adopted and the ideas contained in the various essays, also testify to a further effort, that of seeking to make a new and original contribution to the subject under discussion.

The architecture of the volume in some ways reflects this multiple commitment and consequently requires some clarification. On the one hand, it has seemed necessary to offer the reader the broadest possible view, embracing the different ambits of historical experience: from society to politics, from music to literature, from the history of art to law, from the Church to the economy. It has therefore been decided to explicate a number of themes (historical anthropology, gender history, social and political identity, the Church, the Jews etc.) on which the historiographical debate has been particularly lively in recent years and which it seemed opportune to take into account. On the other hand, it appeared useful to consider a wide territorial range and cover a broad chronological arc, not just the city of Milan in the period of its greatest development, so as to shed light on the precocious and enduring capacity of the Ambrosian metropolis to attract a large number of lands and communities, to link its fortunes with those of the surrounding cities: in a word, to create a large-scale political coordination within which the profile of this regional space would take shape. This is probably the most significant element put forward in the book. However much the borders of the state might change again and again, and despite the disinclination of social and political bodies to amalgamate, it would be difficult to deny the development, even if slow and inconsistent, of shared elements: elements, it should be noted, that if incapable of generating a true collective identity, nonetheless succeeded in marking out

a distinctive sphere, with strong affinities.¹ The story of the state of Milan is in fact something more than the simple history of the lands and cities that were part of it. And the chapters gathered here, although each is focused on a particular theme, offer precious indications of the specific characteristics of the state of Milan as a whole: to investigate those basic elements that reveal themselves—sometimes in the long term, sometimes over shorter periods—as characteristic traits, leaving their stamp on this formation, despite its undoubtable transformations.

The story of the state of Milan began with the start of the expansionist phase of the Visconti *signoria* (in the first half of the fourteenth century), even if for at least three centuries the Ambrosian city, thanks initially to the prestige of its archbishops, then also to the economic and military power of the commune, had succeeded in constructing an area of influence that went well beyond the borders of the *contado* (Gamberini).

In the four centuries from its formation to the end of the Spanish era (1706), the state of Milan appeared as a continually changing political and social space. First of all, the borders changed—as Federico Chabod observed,² after the apogee reached in the earliest years of the fifteenth century (Map 1), they continued to shrink, becoming stable only in the first decades of the sixteenth century, after the final loss of Parma and Piacenza (Map 2)—but more generally it was the entire organization of the society that changed, together with the values and ideals that guided the actors, its economic structures, its political articulation.

All the authors are conscious of the theme of continuities and discontinuities, that undoubtedly confirms the full validity of some chronological divisions commonly used by historians, beginning with the identification of a genuine watershed in the decades between the start of the Italian Wars and the devolution of the duchy in 1535. Although the days have long gone in which historians looked on the advent of the foreign dominions as the start of a long decadence of Italy (moral and political, even more than economic and social),³ the pro-

1 The development of a shared identity was a much later phenomenon, for which see the observations of Simona Mori, 'La Lombardia settecentesca come ipotesi di spazio nazionale: iniziativa asburgica e culture territoriali a confronto', in Angela De Benedictis, Irene Fosi, Luca Mannori (eds), *Nazioni d'Italia. Identità politiche e appartenenze regionali fra Settecento e Ottocento* (Roma, 2012), pp. 53–74.

2 Federico Chabod, *Lo Stato di Milano nell'Impero di Carlo V* (Roma, 1934), p. 11.

3 See the observations of Elena Fasano Guarini, 'Geographies of power. The territorial state in early modern Italy', in John Jeffries Martin (ed.), *The Renaissance. Italy and Abroad* (London, 2003), pp. 89–103, 91. The theme of decadence can be observed in authors such as Marino



found transformations linked to the insertion of Milan into the system of the French monarchy and then into that of the Spanish Habsburgs are deniable. On the one hand, these grafted onto the ducal inheritance new institutional models (the Senate, the *Congregazione dello Stato*, the governor, etc.) and new practices of government. On the other, they ended up shifting—at least in part—the political centre of gravity to outside the state. In fact, although the Austrias (the Spanish Habsburgs) considered the state of Milan absolutely central, as an element of connection between the different parts of their “composite monarchy”, the disappearance of the court—understood as the place of decision-making, as well as of the distribution of resources and social promotion—had structural repercussions on the organization of the entire political society. The families of the signorial and feudal aristocracy, for example, who had carved out for themselves a leading role in the era of the Visconti and the Sforza (and subsequently of the French), thanks to their control of lands and castles in the *contado* and capacity to lead factions that were projected from their rural strongholds into the cities, rapidly lost ground.⁴ With the entrance of Milan into the mighty Habsburg union, capable of displaying military power that was undoubtedly greater than that of the dukes, the balance of forces between government and territorial aristocracy suddenly changed. The advantage in political competition now went to those who—independently of the antiquity of their lineage and of local roots—could boast an entrée to the court at Madrid, enrol at their own expense well-trained and well-equipped mercenary troops, or perhaps play at more than one table, thanks to their many acquaintances in the court of Rome, or with neighbouring powers, etc.⁵ In relations with the territorial bodies of the state, however, the Austrias chose to make a break, recognizing for the cities that role of jurisdictional centres for the *contado* that in the ducal era had been gravely compromised by the many

Berengo, *La storiografia italiana negli ultimi vent'anni* (Milan, 1970), I, pp. 483–518, and Angelo Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo nella società veneta del '400 e del '500* (Bari, 1963).

- 4 The bibliography on factions has grown enormously in recent years. For this, see Marco Gentile, 'Factions and parties. Problems and perspectives', in A. Gamberini and I. Lazzerini (eds), *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 304–322. On the revival of the factions during the Italian Wars, and on the privileged role accorded by the French governments to the territorial aristocracies, veritable intermediaries in relations with the subject populations, see Letizia Arcangeli, 'Note su Milano e la città lombarde nelle guerre di Luigi XII (1499–1515)', in G.M. Anselmi, A. De Benedictis (eds), *Città in guerra. Esperienze e riflessioni nel primo Cinquecento* (Bologna, 2008), pp. 135–152.
- 5 A recent reconnaissance of these themes is offered by Cinzia Cremonini, *Le vie della distinzione. Società, potere e cultura a Milano tra XV e XVIII secolo* (Milano, 2012). But see also Cesare Mozzarelli, *Antico regime e modernità* (Roma, 2008).

separations granted to townships/*borghi* and feudataries.⁶ The urban elites themselves became the principal allies of the monarchy, in the search for support against possible unrest from below.⁷

In this way, the conditions for a twofold change: on the plane of social status, where a new conception of nobility, essentially based on the exercise of civic office (the patriciate), flanked and in large part overtook more traditional definitions; and on the political and institutional plane, where the relation of city and *contado* assumed a character of more accentuated opposition than in the past. As Federico Del Tredici lucidly observes in his essay, the decline of the territorial aristocracies in fact also brought with it the decline of the factions, or rather of those structures that in the ducal era had performed a most important—and long overlooked—function of communication and exchange between urban centres and their respective territories. Patricians and great nobles did not, of course, cease to cultivate their own interests in the *contado*, investing their own riches there, but the political content of the relation changed. On one side the fiefs, very numerous still in this period, lost much of the jurisdictional attributes they had in the ducal era, retaining a predominantly economic and honorific importance: it was not by chance that castles began to give way to villas or to be transformed into sumptuous aristocratic residences.⁸ On the other, the fiscal reforms launched by Charles V

6 See Andrea Gamberini, *Oltre le città. Assetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo Medioevo* (Roma, 2009).

7 Gianvittorio Signorotto, 'A proposito della fedeltà di Milano alla Monarchia cattolica', in Bruno Anatra, Giovanni Murgia (eds), *Sardegna, Spagna e Mediterraneo: dai re cattolici al secolo d'oro* (Rome, 2004), pp. 278–87; Cesare Mozzarelli, Pierangelo Schiera (eds), *Patriziati e aristocrazie nobiliari. Ceti dominanti e organizzazione del potere nell'Italia centro-settentrionale dal XVI al XVIII secolo* (Trento, 1978). A reflection by Ferrante Gonzaga, Spanish governor of the state of Milan between 1546 and 1553, is very indicative: "the people are incapable of rebelling without the help of the nobility": Giovanni Muto, 'La città, lo stato, l'Impero', in Giorgio Politi (ed.), *Storia di Cremona. L'Età degli Asburgo di Spagna (1535–1707?)*, (Azzano San Paolo, 2006), p. 23.

8 Domenico Sella, *Postilla sui feudi*, in Domenico Sella, *L'economia lombarda durante la dominazione spagnola* (Bologna, 1981). More recently: Matteo Sacchi, "Alla ferrata solita della loggia dei mercanti". Il mercato dei feudi in Lombardia (1680–1700), *Società e Storia*, 103 (2004), pp. 51–95; Katia Visconti, 'A hypothesis for a feudal prosopography. Strategies of acquisition, management and conservation of the fiefs in the Milan State between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century', in G. De Luca, G. Sabatini (eds), *Growing in the Shadow of an Empire. How Spanish Colonialism Affected Economic Development in Europe and in the World (16th–18th cc.)*, (Milano, 2012), pp. 319–331. In some areas, however, the fief allowed the holder to exercise a quasi-signiorial function: Emanuele C. Colombo, *Giochi di luoghi. Il territorio lombardo nel Seicento* (Milano, 2008), pp. 52ff.

(first and foremost, the project of the *catasto*, lasting several decades),⁹ cancelling the greater part of the concessions linked to the privileged status of individual contributors (nobles, merchants, etc.), ended by significantly limiting the feudataries' function of fiscal protection that in the ducal era had worked in favour of their communities and on which they had based no small part of their ascendancy over the peasants.¹⁰ Under a normative framework that now only recognized two fiscal regimes, one for the property of citizens and one for the property of the inhabitants of the *contado*, the interests of patrician-feudataries and those of peasants became ever more divergent. And so, while the former consolidated themselves in citizen oligarchies tending to become closed and with marked class characteristics, the latter found in horizontal solidarities between communities the strength to give life to entities representing the *contado*, capable of protecting their own collective interests both in the provincial sphere and in the *Congregazione dello Stato* (where the syndics of the nine *contadi* sat alongside the envoys of the nine cities of the state).¹¹

These brief notes are already enough to give an idea of the importance of the political and institutional changes that came about with the end of the independent duchy. But the repercussions of the change of regime, and in particular, of the disappearance of the court, went well beyond the compass considered so far. The arts, for example, that in the era of the Visconti and the Sforza had benefited enormously from the presence of an ambitious

9 On the *catasto*: Giovanni Vigo, *Fisco e società nella Lombardia del Cinquecento* (Bologna, 1979). Giorgio Chittolini emphasizes the political implications of the *catasto* in relations between city and *contado*: 'Notes sur la politique fiscale de Charles Quint dans le duché de Milan. Le 'nuovo catasto' et les rapports entre ville et campagne', in Wim Blockmans, Nicolette Mout (eds), *The World of Emperor Charles V* (Amsterdam, 2004), pp. 143–159.

10 The feudataries did keep an important role in protecting the communities, in relation to requests for military billets. Alessandro Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio. Alloggiamenti militari e "case herme" nello Stato di Milano (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Firenze, 2009). But on these matters see also the contribution of Alessandra Dattero to this volume. Giorgio Chittolini has already called attention to the fiscal and jurisdictional protection exercised by the feudataries in the ducal era, in *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado. Secoli XIV–XV* (Torino, 1979). A more recent examination in Federica Cengarle, Giorgio Chittolini, Gian Maria Varanini (eds), *Poteri signorili e feudali nelle campagne dell'Italia settentrionale fra Tre e Quattrocento: fondamenti di legittimità e forme di esercizio* (Firenze, 2005).

11 Cinzia Cremonini, 'The Congregazione dello Stato between renewed local fervor and unitary tension (1590–1706)', in De Luca, Sabatini (eds), *Growing in the Shadow of an Empire*, pp. 361–376. On the development of the *contadi* (as ambits of representation of the communities), there is now a substantial bibliography: see the essay of Stefano D'Amico in this volume.

indigenous dynasty and of an aristocracy always ready to imitate its behaviour (when it was not vying with it in splendour and grandeur), underwent as profound a change. The new and different patronage of the Spanish era, linked to the holders of the major offices and magistracies, who were often from outside Milan (and sometimes foreigners), in the end opened up new spaces to the circulation of imported tastes (and masters), especially from Piedmont and Venice (Serena Romano, Alessandro Morandotti).

It suffices, however, to shift the focus to literature (Massimo Zaggia), to music (Giuliano Di Bacco, Christine Getz) or to ecclesiastical and religious life (Giancarlo Andenna), to see how the disappearance of the court was in reality only the first of a connected series of events, passing through the Reformation and the Counter Reformation (or Catholic Reform)—this last headed in Lombardy by the energetic figure of Carlo Borromeo (Claudia Di Filippo, Giuliana Albini)—destined to leave deep traces, and therefore to suggest a more complex periodization than the threshold represented by the Italian Wars. For the Jews, for example, the turning-point came in the second half of the sixteenth century, when a progressive worsening of their living conditions began, culminating in the expulsion decreed by the Spanish monarchy in 1597 (Germano Maifreda). Different again, finally, is the time scale that emerges from analysis of economic affairs, for which the real turning-point seems to come still later, with the restructuring of the 1630s (Giovanna Tonelli).¹²

The question of periodization therefore remains open, and various readings are possible, according to the angle of observation. Nevertheless, the broad chronological span of this volume permits recognition, besides the many possible *caesurae* and discontinuities, of those fundamental elements that seem to connote the history of the state of Milan.

To ask what the duchy of Milan in the age of Gian Galeazzo (d. 1402), when the southern border of the dominion reached central Italy and there were around thirty subject cities, might have in common with the little state of the mid-seventeenth century, reduced to less than ten cities and governed from Madrid, may perhaps seem provocative, but the answer is less obvious than it might appear.

Many indications in fact suggest the possibility of tracing the lineaments of a space that could be superimposed over the state of Milan or broadly coincident with it, provided with its own specificity, at least in particular periods and with respect to particular spheres: not—it should be observed—with mythical original characteristics, perhaps of a metatemporal nature, but a collec-

12 But see also Giovanni Vigo, *Nel cuore della crisi. Politica economica e metamorfosi industriale nella Lombardia del Seicento* (Pavia, 2000).

tion of elements that permeate the history of the state of Milan, sometimes for century after century, sometimes for more limited periods, but which appear capable of defining its uniqueness with respect to neighbouring regions.

On the cultural plane—not only literary or artistic, but also juridical and political cultures—it is, for instance, difficult to escape the impression that at the beginning of the age considered here there took shape a “Lombard space”, endowed with shared and recognizable elements.¹³ Simona Mori has emphasized how a fair degree of integration was realized on the plane of juridical and institutional culture: that incarnated by the tradition of ducal and regal decrees, then incorporated in the *Novae Constitutiones* of 1541, and integrated with the many local legal codes thanks to the action of the Senate, the supreme tribunal of the state, whose jurisprudence in the end produced a true “*diritto patrio*”.¹⁴

Certainly, the language that permeated the new law and the new institutions helped to transmit an image of solidarity and unity of the state that hid the unresolved tensions between the territorial bodies, and the persistence of quite strong divisions.¹⁵ No less powerful appears to have been the distorting filter of cartographical representations, ever more numerous from the Spanish era.¹⁶ And yet, discounting these aspects, the result of the intense institutional activity conducted by the authorities appears indubitable, able to harmonize the plurality of juridical and political traditions in a shared milieu, indeed, into a true regional law.

13 On the concept of Lombardy and its variations over time, see the observations of Giancarlo Andenna, *Storia della Lombardia medievale* (Torino, 1998), pp. 1–20.

14 Besides the essays of Simona Mori and Jane Black (and the bibliography cited there) see at least Mozzarelli, *Antico regime e modernità*, above all p. 359, and Gigliola Di Renzo Villata, ‘Tra ius nostrum e ius comune. Il diritto patrio nel Ducato di Milano’, in I. Birocchi and A. Mattone (eds.), *Il Diritto patrio tra diritto comune e codificazione* (Roma, 2006), pp. 217–254; Gigliola Di Renzo Villata, ‘Sulle tracce di un diritto patrio nel Ducato di Milano a metà Cinquecento: tra Novae Constitutiones (1541) e fonti del diritto antiche e recenti’, in Alberto Rocca, Paola Vismara (eds.), *Prima di Carlo Borromeo. Istituzioni, religione e società agli inizi del Cinquecento* (Milano, 2012), pp. 121–156.

15 Letizia Arcangeli, ‘Nello stato di Milano sulle tracce di Leandro Alberti. Alcune note su politica e territorio nel primo Cinquecento’, in Massimo Donattini (ed.), *L’Italia dell’inquisitore. Storia e geografia dell’Italia del Cinquecento nella Descrizione di Leandro Alberti* (Bologna, 2007), pp. 479–506.

16 “Borders, fortifications and watercourses were therefore the guiding threads and dominant themes of the cartographical portrayal of Spanish Lombardy”: Giovanni Liva, ‘La rappresentazione cartografica del territorio fra Cinquecento e Seicento’, in *Grandezza e splendore della Lombardia spagnola, 1535–1701* (Milano, 2002), pp. 29–35.

Nor does this picture, marked by recognition of the progress in state-building, conflict with the impression that the strongest sense of belonging among the inhabitants was not to the state, that they generally felt more grounded in a sense of local identity.¹⁷ Moreover, even in formations traditionally considered by historians as the expression of a more complete outcome of state construction—such as France in the age of absolutism—territorial identities (especially those connected to the *pays d'origine*) were by no means dissolved in a wider and more heartfelt sense of belonging to the kingdom.

In reality, a particular political identity of the regional space considered here is fully evident in contemporary sources, but to bring it out it is necessary to abandon the terrain of institutions and of the state, traditionally favoured in the historiography, to dwell instead on that of more general political culture, within which, moreover, the state itself (or what it was originally: the Visconti *signoria*) took its first steps. What ever-increasing research has brought to light, in fact, is the existence of a particular way of understanding and experiencing relations between different social groups, of regulating access to resources, of organizing competitively: in short, of constructing the political space (Della Misericordia). In the words of the actors, as in those of external observers, there emerges a kind of original *mos Lombardorum*. In the severe judgement of Machiavelli on the “gentlemen of Lombardy”, represented as nothing less than “enemies of all civilization”, for example, there is all the indignation of one who, originating from a place where the “civilizing” action of the city had eliminated the pockets of signorial dominion in the *contado*, recognized the enduring rootedness of the territorial aristocracies.¹⁸ Not only this. According to Baldassarre Castiglione, characteristic of the “countryside of Lombardy” was the “familiarity” between these gentlemen and their peasants: a closeness that the author of the *Libro del Cortegiano* observed in the tendency of young people of different social extraction to play and dance together at festivities, but whose political corollary was the factions, or rather structures able to

17 Those governing can be seen to have tried to promote a state identity since the Visconti era. But the attempts of some dukes (Gian Galeazzo, for instance) to turn *cives* into *subditi*, so as to weaken local identities and establish individual rights and duties on belonging to wider communities in the state, met with strong resistance from the territorial bodies, above all the urban ones, jealous guardians of their own traditions and of the privileges derived from them. Andrea Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo. Linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milano, 2005); Andrea Gamberini, *La città assediata. Poteri e identità politiche a Reggio in età viscontea* (Roma, 2003).

18 Letizia Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia. Ricerche sull'aristocrazia padana del Rinascimento* (Milano, 2003); Gamberini, *Oltre le città*.

aggregate around a “gentleman” a following of individuals of various conditions and origins.¹⁹

It is worth noting that just these peculiarities often gave rise to misunderstandings—and thus of conflict—between the inhabitants of the region and the officials from outside appointed to govern the territory, to the point where, in order to avoid similar problems, the community of Parma in 1456 asked the prince to send a *podestà* who would be familiar with “the Lombard way of life”.²⁰ How far this was profoundly rooted in the social fabric is something that emerges clearly from the story of those places which, although no longer part of the state of Milan (this is the case for Bergamo and Brescia, which passed to Venice in the late 1420s), long preserved their original imprinting.²¹

Yet it is not only on the political plane that the Lombard space became clearly recognizable: on that of religious culture, too, there matured quite well defined characteristics, especially at particular moments. Thus, for example, the reforming zeal of Cardinal Carlo Borromeo, which spread beyond the Ambrosian diocese, left a profound and original legacy in the suffragan dioceses as well (Claudia Di Filippo Bareggi), and with consequences visible in other spheres, such as the artistic: in the severe decrees concerning burials, for instance, which led to the stripping of those family tombs considered too sumptuous, or, more generally, the norms with which Borromeo aimed to regulate every detail of the sacred edifice, and that found in Pellegrino Tibaldi a zealous executor, not only in Milan, but also in other cities of the state. Artistically, too, therefore, Borromean Lombardy connotes a recognizably distinct space.

But the characteristics of a really regional ambit emerge clearly on the plane of infrastructure as well. It was, in fact, within the political frame of the Visconti and Sforza duchy that the foundations were laid for the development

19 Claudio Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia. Secoli XIV–XVIII* (Rome-Bari, 1995), p. 43. The passage from Castiglioni is mentioned in the chapters of Massimo Della Misericordia and Federico Del Tredici.

20 Marco Gentile, ‘La volontà d’impotenza. Rapporti di forza e gestione del “disordine” nel ducato sforzesco’, in Livio Antonielli (ed.), *Le polizie informali* (Soveria Mannelli, 2010), pp. 45–63; Marco Gentile, ‘Tuscans and Lombards. Notes on the political culture of officialdom in Florentine Tuscany and Sforza Lombardy’, in R. Black and J.E. Law (eds), *The Medici in the Fifteenth Century: Signori of Florence?* (Cambridge, Mass., forthcoming).

21 Gian Maria Varanini, ‘La Terraferma di fronte alla sconfitta di Agnadello’, in Giuseppe Gullino (ed.), *L’Europa e la Serenissima. La svolta del 1509* (Venezia, 2011), pp. 115–161, in particular pp. 140ff. Moreover, an acute reading of the characteristics of the Venetian political and social space is in Gaetano Cozzi, *Ambiente veneziano, ambiente veneto. Saggi su politica, società, cultura nella Repubblica di Venezia in età moderna* (Venezia, 1997), pp. 291–352.

of a network of roads, canals and waterways so far in the vanguard that the Lombard route system became the best of the early modern age, the fly-wheel for a rich and diversified economy. From this point of view it is impossible to ignore the shrewdness of the choices made in the wake of the Black Death of the mid-fourteenth century. In agriculture, for example, the progressive extension of irrigated meadowland in many areas of the Bassa, the premiss for permanent stalling (and thus for cheese production), remained a long term trait, a remunerative complement to cereals and vines. In the eighteenth century, foreign visitors still admired the productivity and modernity of the irrigated Lombard plain, which integrated stockrearing and cereal growing. But the cultivation of rice and mulberries, as well as the cultivation of dye plants, all destined to prosper from the early modern era, had late medieval origins (Mainoni, Tonelli).

Manufacturing structures also long retained the stamp of how they had been in the later Middle Ages: and even when in the 1630s the textile industry abandoned sectors prosperous until then, such as those of high value goods—that it was now more convenient to import—the plural character of the places of production did not change, continuing to be distributed between city and countryside.²² Integration between urban and rural manufacturing—as Patrizia Mainoni observes—constituted one of the most typical features of the area, which certainly distinguished it from Tuscany. And the same can be said of the economic autonomy of the various cities (and of the provinces of which they were the heads), a real constant over a long period.²³

Milan was, in fact, a capital *sui generis*, that grew, developed, prospered, but—as emphasized again by Patrizia Mainoni—did not drain resources and manpower from the other cities of the dominion (as Venice, Naples and Florence did). And this was because the Visconti and the Sforza contributed to making Milan a rich and populous capital—that a merchant from Germany

22 Indeed, rural production compensated for the growing crisis in urban production. Giancarlo Consonni, Graziella Tonon, 'La terra degli ossimori. Caratteri del territorio e del paesaggio della Lombardia contemporanea', in Duccio Bigazzi, Marco Meriggi (eds), *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'unità a oggi. La Lombardia* (Torino, 2001), pp. 53–187. But see also Sella, *L'economia lombarda durante la dominazione spagnola*.

23 Despite becoming part of the Venetian Terraferma, Bergamo and Brescia from the economic point of view still gravitated significantly towards Milan, with which they shared some fundamental characteristics. Similarly, places beyond the Ticino (Novara, Alessandria and Tortona) had peculiarities, but also affinities with the rest of the state. These aspects are emphasized in Emanuele Colombo, 'Three Lombardies in the seventeenth century: some explanatory notes on a many-sided territory', in *Growing in the Shadow of an Empire*, pp. 333–341.

even defined as “the economic heart of Europe” and which at the end of the fifteenth century numbered around 100,000 inhabitants²⁴—but they never allowed its inhabitants to make themselves into the governing class of the state, to make the resources of other cities and places in the dominion serve their exclusive interests, to monopolize posts and offices. Nor did the Milanese achieve these ambitions under the Spanish. It is beyond doubt that the arrival of the Habsburgs opened up to the ambitious Ambrosian elites spaces and opportunities far greater than in the past, as is shown by the substantial representation they obtained in the Senate (where they accounted for at least four seats out of 14; not a few, considering that three went to the Spanish), or as emerges from the distribution of the most important offices and positions in government.²⁵ Yet this flourishing of the Milanese did not erase the role of the other patriciates, nor extinguish the antagonism with other cities, beginning with the largest, such as Pavia, seat of the only university of the dominion and in no way resigned to the loss of its role as the ancient capital, or Cremona, the major centre of population in the region after Milan and always vigilant against Milanese attempts to grab posts and offices.²⁶

Thus we have arrived at what was probably, if not the distinguishing mark of the state of Milan, certainly one of its most characteristic traits: its strongly polycentric and pluralistic character. On closer examination, some of those aspects which have already been pointed out—from the dissemination of the structures of production (and in part of markets as well)²⁷ to the multiplicity of political cultures in force were only a manifestation of this trait.

The reader familiar with Italian historiography might object that for some years now historians of the states of the early modern era (not only those of the state of Milan) have been engaged in dismantling the old categories of centre and periphery, to break them down into the many actors that at various

24 Aldo De Maddalena, *L'economia Milanese in età spagnola*, in *Storia illustrata di Milano* (Milano, 1993), vol. IV, p. 1081.

25 For example, the presidency of the *Congregazione dello stato* was an attribute of the *vicario di provvigione* of Milan. On these matters see Franco Arese, ‘Le supreme cariche dello Stato di Milano’, in Cinzia Cremonini (ed.), *Carriere, magistrature e stato: le ricerche di Franco Arese Lucini per l'«Archivio Storico Lombardo» (1950–1981)* (Milan, 2008).

26 Muto, ‘La città, lo Stato, l'Impero’, p. 30.

27 Stephan R. Epstein, *Freedom and Growth. The rise of states and markets in Europe, 1300–1750* (London, 2000); Massimo Della Misericordia, *Territori, istituzioni locali e spazi economici nella montagna lombarda del tardo medioevo* <http://www.adfontes.it/biblioteca/scaffale/mdm-confini/presentazione.html>; Emanuele C. Colombo, ‘Alla ricerca del mercato. Mercati rurali del Lodigiano e del Cremonese nel Seicento’, *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni*, LVII (2007), pp. 149–185.

levels and with different capacities for action were able to interact and contribute to constitutional dynamics.²⁸

In the emphasis placed on pluralism and on the vivacity of the territorial bodies of the state of Milan there is, however, something more than concession to a more general historiographical climate tending to disseminate the places of politics and to multiply the actors. The impression is that this plurality and this dynamism have assumed traits quite peculiar to the state of Milan.

For the later medieval era the researches launched by Giorgio Chittolini have made evident the wealth of voices and actors, particularly those active in the territory: not only in the cities, therefore, but also in the villages, large and small, the big *borghi*, the communities of communities (those of valleys, lakes, parishes etc), the rural lordships that found a legitimizing ground in the nascent regional state.²⁹ And successive research, rather than simplify this picture, has if anything emphasized its complexity, bringing to light the role of further actors, from the elites of the *borghi* to factions.³⁰ All actors—it should be noted—that elsewhere did not have the same vitality or the same wide diffusion. Not in the Venetian Terraferma, where, for instance, the districts controlled by the cities had a much stronger grip on the territory: in this area, the ambitions of townships and communities were effectively contained, factions non-existent (apart from Friuli) and the role of the territorial aristocracies confined to circumscribed and often marginal zones.³¹ And not in Florentine Tuscany, where the subject cities were much more contained, their territory dismembered by the new circumscriptions cut out by the dominant city, there

28 Elena Fasano Guarini, "Center and Periphery", in Julius Kirshner (ed.), *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300–1600* (Chicago, 1996), pp. 74–96. Very indicative of this historiographical trend is William J. Connell, Andrea Zorzi (eds), *Florentine Tuscany: Structures and Practices of Power* (Cambridge, 2004). For the Veneto: Gian Maria Varanini, 'La Terraferma veneta nel Quattrocento e le tendenze recenti della storiografia', *Ateneo Veneto*, CXCVII 9/1 (2010), pp. 13–63.

29 Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale*; Chittolini, *Città, comunità, feudi*.

30 For this, see Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo*; Marco Gentile, *Fazioni al governo. Politica e società a Parma nel Quattrocento* (Roma 2009); Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia*; Massimo Della Misericordia, *Divenire comunità. Comuni rurali, poteri locali, identità sociali e territoriali in Valtellina e nella montagna lombarda nel tardo Medioevo* (Milano, 2006); Federico Del Tredici, *Comunità, nobili e gentiluomini nel contado di Milano del Quattrocento* (Milano, 2013).

31 Gian Maria Varanini, 'La Terraferma veneta nel Quattrocento'; Michael Knapton, 'The Terraferma state', in Eric R. Dursteler (ed.), *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400–1797* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 85–124; Michael Knapton, *Venice and the Terraferma*, in Gamberini, Lazzarini (eds.), *The Italian Renaissance State*, pp. 132–155.

were practically no fiefs, initiatives from below were more restricted, and the *contadi* did not exist in the modern era.³²

The very links of clientage, that in all states of that time assisted in integrating the peripheries with the centres of power, assumed in the Visconti and Sforza duchy exclusive characteristics, that reflected its original plural configuration. If in Florentine Tuscany the functions of mediation were monopolized by the patriciate of Florence (and then by the Medici), and if in the Papal States these functions were exclusive to the great Roman families of the Orsini and Colonna, the only ones capable of projecting their influence as far as the Umbrian cities, in ducal Lombardy no one—and least of all the Milanese elites—succeeded in having sole rights to these relations. Here, indeed, the “tenacious tradition of political and institutional pluralism impeded the centralization of the functions of patronage”, that continued instead to be disseminated among more or less powerful local lords, leading citizens, community elites, etc.³³

Compared with the time of the Visconti and the Sforza, the Spanish era saw the disappearance of some actors (the civic factions), the transformation of others, but on the whole the web of territorial bodies remained dense and with a quite particular physiognomy. There were still very many feudataries to be found, if now with a different role. Likewise, the high number of “*terre grosse*”, of *borghi*, which developed just in the last centuries of the Middle Ages—even if only some achieved full jurisdictional separation—remains a distinctive trait of Spanish Lombardy, that confirms its own identity, different from Tuscany or the Veneto, from this point of view as well.³⁴

Economic historiography has for some time brought out the propulsive role of these large centres, and more in general of rural communities:³⁵ so much so,

32 Connell, Zorzi (eds), *Florentine Tuscany*; Luca Mannori, *Il sovrano tutore: pluralismo istituzionale e accentramento amministrativo nel principato dei Medici, secc. XVI–XVIII* (Milano, 1994); Luca Mannori, *Effetto domino. Il profilo dello stato territoriale toscano nella storiografia degli ultimi trent'anni*, in Mario Ascheri, Alessandra Contini (eds), *La Toscana in età moderna, secoli XVII–XVIII. Politica, istituzioni, società: studi recenti e prospettive di ricerca* (Firenze, 2005), pp. 59–90.

33 Massimo Della Misericordia, ‘La coda dei gentiluomini. Fazioni, mediazione politica, clientelismo nella montagna lombarda durante il dominio sforzesco (xv secolo)’, in Marco Gentile (ed.), *Guelfi e ghibellini nell’Italia del Rinascimento* (Roma, 2005), pp. 275–389, in particular 379–380.

34 A good example is that reconstructed by Emanuele C. Colombo, *Il Contado di Vigevano e la forza di una comunità. Gambolò e la provincia nel Seicento* (Vigevano, 2005).

35 Vittorio Beonio Brocchieri, *Piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo. Famiglie e mestieri nel Ducato di Milano in età spagnola* (Milano, 2000); Consonni, Tonon, ‘La terra degli ossimori’.

that this research has resulted in an implicit invitation to explore the vivacity, including the political vivacity, of the world of the countryside. And in fact in a historiographical review some years ago, Gianvittorio Signorotto pointed to the institutions of the *contado* as the ambit in which to verify the uninterrupted protagonism of the territory, which economic historians confirm for the modern age, too.³⁶

From a distance of nearly twenty years it can be said that the suggestion has been partially taken up. A careful analysis of the *Contadi*, of their internal structure and their functions, has revealed aspects that are in some ways surprising. The image of static structures, solely dedicated to the division of the *estimo* among the territorial bodies, and to negotiation with the cities, has been modified, in the direction of more complex readings, that have brought to light the capacity of local actors to use these same institutions for their own ends. The creation of the *contado* of Alessandria, for example, far from responding solely to the need of the city to divide up fiscal burdens among rural communities, became instead the instrument through which rural elites constructed a space for free trade with Genoa.³⁷

If in some circumstances the *Contadi* might appear united in pursuit of an objective, in many others they revealed, through the tensions that pervaded them, the multiplicity of local actors: if not the tendency to multiply further. As some studies have shown, the lists of lands and communities of each *contado* photograph—and not always inaccurately—the situation in a given moment, obscuring the great dynamism that could lead in the course of time to significant variations, above all through the direct or indirect impulse of taxation.³⁸ Although historians have now rejected the image transmitted by the tradition of an oppressive Spanish domination sucking up the resources of Lombardy,³⁹ it is now beyond doubt that the difficult economic trends of

36 Gianvittorio Signorotto, 'La Stato di Milano in età spagnola. Aggiornamenti e prospettive di ricerca', in Elena Brambilla, Giovanni Muto (eds), *La Lombardia spagnola. Nuovi indirizzi di ricerca* (Milano, 1997), pp. 11–27, above all pp. 25ff.

37 Helped by the possibility of exporting local crops to the Genoese market, the population often succeeded in evading the enforcements applied in the case of failure to pay the land tax. Angelo Torre, 'Il Contado di Alessandria: prime approssimazioni e problemi di metodo per la lettura di un'istituzione di antico regime', in Gelsomina Spione, Angelo Torre (eds), *Uno spazio storico. Committenze, istituzioni e luoghi nel Piemonte meridionale* (Torino, 2007), pp. 201–211.

38 Emanuele C. Colombo, *Giochi di luoghi. Il territorio lombardo nel Seicento* (Milano, 2008).

39 Mozzarelli, *Antico regime e modernità*, pp. 385ff. See also Gianvittorio Signorotto, 'Aperture e pregiudizi nella storiografia italiana del XIX secolo. Interpretazioni della Lombardia spagnola', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 126 (2000), pp. 513–560.

much of the seventeenth century (the Thirty Years' War, the famous pestilence recorded by Alessandro Manzoni in *I Promessi Sposi*, etc) brought a decided increase of fiscal pressure. Without dwelling here on its complex mechanisms, it is enough to observe how under the weight of tax demands and above all the burden of military billets (that were a corollary of taxation) a redefinition of many territorial bodies was set under way: whether they were whole *contadi* splitting up, as did that of Vigevano, or small communities, broken up into still smaller units (sometimes in the search for *de facto* immunity, sometimes instead because they were made jointly responsible for exaction), the result was an extremely dynamic picture, in which there was even room for the attempt by some feudataries to exercise signorial prerogatives again.⁴⁰ To which should be added, that often these territorial bodies, which had already enjoyed a certain autonomy in many sectors in the ducal era, continued in the successive era to have a particular regime in many ways, *de iure* or *de facto*: such as the Valsassina, able to preserve a privileged condition from the fiscal and jurisdictional points of view and to position itself "as a political subject before the central government".⁴¹

Further research might still better refine this picture and reveal other distinctive traits of the State of Milan between the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. For now, it is worth pausing here and considering instead a final aspect, not yet made explicit: the reasons that suggest that a marked discontinuity can be seen in the eighteenth century, sufficient to justify the adoption of an earlier chronological conclusion in the present volume.

In 1706—in the middle of the War of the Spanish Succession—the State of Milan was annexed *manu militari* to the domains of the Austrian Habsburgs. It was the beginning of a period of great and profound transformations, which—in the words of Carlo Capra—would make the State of Milan "the laboratory of modernity": in the course of barely a century Milan and the other cities of the state knew the Enlightenment, codifications of the laws, and reforms!⁴² But innovations were not restricted to these aspects. The axis of the state was tilted eastwards, turning in spirit towards Vienna: the borders were extended to the east, thanks to the progressive inclusion of Mantua, and contemporaneously shrank to the west, with the loss of places beyond the Ticino, Novara, Vigevano,

40 Emanuele C. Colombo, 'Costruire contadi. Il vigevesco in età moderna', *Quaderni Storici*, 139 (2012), pp. 15–45; Colombo, *Giochi di luoghi*.

41 Alessandra Dattero, *La famiglia Manzoni e la Valsassina. Politica, economia e società nello Stato di Milano durante l'antico regime* (Milano, 1997), pp. 11–25; quotation on p. 7.

42 Carlo Capra, 'Austriaci e francesi a Milano: il laboratorio della modernità', in *Il laboratorio della modernità. Milano tra austriaci e francesi* (Milano, 2003), pp. 13–23.

Tortona and Alessandria. Finally, to mark the change, the name of the state changed as well. The traditional one of the State of Milan gave way to that of Austrian Lombardy: a name that aimed to promote in subjects a greater cohesion, by leaving behind the traditional—but obstructive—reference to the capital city alone, but which at the same time signalled a clear wish for discontinuity.⁴³

43 Simona Mori, 'La Lombardia settecentesca'. In reality, the Visconti and Sforza had already tried to appropriate the term "Lombardy", so as to cover with a unifying label such a fragmented dominion, but the designation "Duchy of Lombardy" never took hold, and the word "Lombardy" continued to have a prevalently geographical meaning, to indicate the whole of the Po Valley. Jane Black, 'The emergence of the duchy of Milan: language and the territorial state', *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 14/1 (2013), <http://rivista.retimedievali.it>. Already in the communal era, the term "Lombardy" had oscillated between a solely geographical meaning and a political one as well. See Andenna, *Storia della Lombardia medievale*.

Milan and Lombardy in the Era of the Visconti and the Sforza

Andrea Gamberini

Dwarves on the Shoulders of Giants

In 1402, at the apex of its expansion, the state of Milan extended over a large part of northern and central Italy and numbered over thirty cities with their territories: the banner of the Visconti viper was flown everywhere from the Alto Ticino to Emilia, from eastern Piedmont to the Bellunese Dolomites, from the Valtellina to Lake Trasimene. Even traditionally autonomous centres, such as Pisa, Siena and Perugia, had capitulated in the end, while Florence, the moving spirit of all the principal alliances against the “Milanese tyrant”, had itself come under siege. It was not by chance that, in the face of this impressive progress, many predicted that Gian Galeazzo would assume the title of king.

Able and enterprising, the Visconti had known how to create, in the course of a century, one of the most powerful states of the peninsula, firmly positioned on the international chessboard. Behind this extraordinary success, was not only the political ability of the dynasty: in fact, the Visconti enterprise appears difficult to understand if it is detached from the social and economic context of the Ambrosian metropolis.

Partly owing to its geographical position in the heart of the Po valley, at the crossroads of the principal communication routes, Milan had enjoyed an absolute centrality for centuries, officially recognized when the city became one of the capitals of the Roman Empire (286–402). In the demographic and economic crisis of the High Middle Ages—common to all cities at that time—its importance declined. But even if the Lombards and then the Franks established their capital at Pavia, Milan maintained its role, thanks above all to the prestige and actions of its archbishops. These were not only metropolitans of an ecclesiastical province that included nearly all the dioceses of Piedmont, Liguria and Lombardy, but in the post-Carolingian age succeeded in making themselves civic leaders of the city as well. In the shadow of its Church, Milan prospered, while the archbishop rapidly became the most powerful lord of the Kingdom of Italy, as the Emperor Henry III himself admitted in a diploma of

1046.¹ Favouring the reinforcement of the prelate's political role were not only the power and wealth of the Ambrosian Church, which possessed a huge number of townships and villages in the broad territory between the city and the Alps: the archbishops were also supported by the full weight of the economic and political strength of the Milanese. The same strength that from the end of the twelfth century had allowed the launch of the commune, which was soon capable of not only subjecting the *contado*—the largest in Italy, with an area of 4–5,000 square kilometres, against an average of 2,500 square kilometres²—but also of extending its own sphere of influence to neighbouring cities (Lodi was destroyed in 1111, and there were frequent border clashes with Como). Milanese leadership in the Lombard region was clearly defined during the conflicts with the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, when the Ambrosian city assumed the direction of the Lombard league. The price paid for the rebellion against the Swabian sovereign was in reality very high, seeing that he had no hesitation in ordering the destruction of what was already the most populous city in Europe (1162).

Dramatic as it was, the episode marked only a pause in the development of Milan, which was able to raise its head, force Barbarossa to surrender (Peace of Constance, 1183), and to become in little more than a century that metropolis teeming with merchants and artisans described with pleasure by the friar Bonvesin de la Riva in *De Magnalibus Mediolani*: it was 1288 and the Ambrosian city counted not less than 150,000 inhabitants.³

But the thirteenth century was for Milan not only the century of economic and demographic takeoff, it was also the epoch in which Milanese influence over the region was further strengthened: there were many cities which asked to have Milanese *podestà* and Captains of the People, recognising in this way Ambrosian leadership.⁴ Consequently, when the Visconti *signoria* developed at the end of the century, the political influence of Milan over Lombardy and its role as one of the principal commercial and financial centres in Europe were well advanced. The Visconti did have a determining role in creating the

1 Graziano Alfredo Vergani, "Omne regnum italicum ad suum disponebat nutum: Ariberto d'Intimiano, bishop, warrior and patron", *Il Crocifisso di Ariberto, catalogo della mostra* (Milano 1997), pp. 47–56.

2 Giorgio Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi dell'Italia centro-settentrionale (XIV–XVI secolo)* (Milano 1996), pp. 1–17.

3 Bonvesin de la Riva, *De Magnalibus Mediolani*, ed. Paolo Chiesa (Milano 2009); Giuliana Albini, *Guerra, fame, peste: crisi di mortalità e sistema sanitario nella Lombardia tardomedievale* (Bologna 1984).

4 Elisa Occhipinti, "Podestà da Milano e a Milano fra XII e XIV secolo", in J.-C. Maire Vigueur (ed.), *I podestà dell'Italia comunale* (Roma 2000), I, pp. 43–73.

conditions, political and social, for the area around Milan to prosper still more and for the connections formed back in the precommunal age to be further extended. “Paradiso terrestre”, was how Archbishop Pietro Filargis, a man of culture but also one of the principal counsellors of Gian Galeazzo, defined that part of the Po valley stretching round Milan. Hyperbole, certainly, yet justified by the extraordinary wealth of the territory, which represented the true strength of the dynasty. Of the 45 million ducats Gian Galeazzo drew during his reign from his vast dominion, a good third came from Milan alone.⁵ The policy of conquest and expansion pursued by the Visconti came about in the first place thanks to the resources Milan could offer, to the support of its social orders. This very aspect, if initially representing a source of strength for the dynasty, which was supported in its expansionist designs by a large part of the Ambrosian elites, became a source of weakness in the long term, because of the growing divergence of interests between the dukes and the Milanese.

The Visconti, the Sforza and the City of Milan: From Mutual Support to Confrontation

The advent of the Visconti *signoria* was accomplished in ways not much different from those which saw the affirmation of signorial regimes in so many other cities at that time. Having become spokesmen for one of the factions which were contending for hegemony over the commune of Milan, specifically the aristocratic, Ghibelline faction, the Visconti prevailed after a long conflict with the rival popular, Guelf faction, led by the Della Torre.

Apart from their different political colours, the circumstances of the two rival houses presented numerous analogies. Both of urban extraction, both linked to the archiepiscopal church, from which they had obtained offices and tithes in ecclesiastical fiefs, they were both solidly rooted in sectors of the *contado*, where they possessed lands and castles, the Della Torre in Valsassina, the Visconti in the area of the lower Lago Maggiore.

On the whole, therefore, both families had prominent social and economic bases, which both thought to cloak with a legendary aura, one (the Visconti) claiming descent from Aeneas, the other (the Torriani) from a French prince. But the points of convergence did not end there. Both the Visconti and the Della Torre had in fact identified in the archiepiscopal seat of Milan a

5 Andrea Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo. Linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milano 2005), pp. 153ff.

primary object for their own strategy of advancement, because of the many possibilities—in terms of control of the property and temporalities of the episcopal estate, of the conferment of offices and ecclesiastical benefices, of having at their disposal a network of relations—that were open to whoever controlled the *cathedra episcopi*. In the end it was Ottone Visconti who got it, although the Della Torre managed to hinder his taking possession of the seat until 1277.⁶

What clearly distinguished the two family groups from each other in the second half of the thirteenth century, was the diversity of their roles on the urban political stage. The early rise of the Della Torre, achieved through association with the Roman Church, had opened up to the family opportunities, including economic opportunities, unavailable to other lineages, beginning with the Visconti. To the point that, some decades later the chronicler Pietro Azario observed that Ottone Visconti, the founder of the Visconti *signoria*, “*pauca de patrimonio possidebat*”.⁷

In principle, above all with Martino and Filippo, the Della Torre exercised a power in Milan that apparently respected the forms of the communal institutions. Their authority was manifested through the occupation, for an indefinite period, of an office within the ordinary structures, that of Anziano del Popolo. Recently, historians have emphasized that the thirteenth century development of *signorie* was not irreversible (not only in Milan), that they were, in general, not permanent, and the place of the *signore* within the commune, not above it.⁸ The definitive breach with past practice seemed to come in the late thirteenth century, firstly with Napoleone Della Torre and then, after the victory at the battle of Desio in 1277, with the new *signori* Ottone Visconti, Guglielmo, marquis of Monferrato, and Matteo Visconti. This was the epoch in which the power of the *signore* tended to take more stable and definite forms, to become dynastic (Ottone in his lifetime had his great-nephew Matteo elected Captain of the People, in anticipation of his succession; Matteo associated Galeazzo with him in power), and above all to seek legitimation not just from below

6 Francesco Somaini, “Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali dello stato visconteo-sforzesco”, in *Storia d'Italia*, ed. G. Galasso, vol VI, *Comuni e Signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: la Lombardia* (Torino 1998), pp. 681ff.; Guido Cariboni, “Comunicazione simbolica e finzione della continuità presso i primi Visconti a Milano (1277–1354)”, “*Retimedievali Rivista*”, 9 (2008), <http://www.rmojs.unina.it/index.php/rm/article/view/92>.

7 Francesco Somaini, “Processi costitutivi”, pp. 682ff.

8 Andrea Zorzi, *Le signorie cittadine. Secoli XIII–XV* (Milano 2010); Paolo Grillo, *Milano torriana* (Roma 2013).

(election as *dominus* by the commune), but also from above (the assumption of the title of Imperial Vicar). In the face of these bids for *signoria*, the city does not seem to have entirely lost its own communal awareness, which emerged in the attempt to restore its own institutions, when the opportunity presented itself. As happened in 1302, when the re-entry of the Della Torre into Milan and the consequent withdrawal of the Visconti brought the re-establishment—formally, at least—of the traditional functioning of the commune. It turned out to be a sort of swan song, because the Della Torre were quick to reaffirm, openly, their own role as *domini*. But even this did not extinguish completely in the *cives* the ambition to represent a political body capable of holding a dialogue with the *signori*.

Having returned to Milan thanks to the peace-making efforts of the Emperor Henry VII, Matteo Visconti took power in 1311 and laid the foundations for a dominion that the family would maintain uninterruptedly until 1447. Matteo's objective, shared by his immediate successors, was twofold: on one side to hollow out the autonomy of the commune of Milan (the members of the *consiglio grande* and of the smaller council would no longer be elected, but nominated by the lord; in the mid-fourteenth century a revision of the statutes confirmed that the *signoria* was hereditary, rendering the election of the *dominus* by the *consiglio grande* superfluous, et cetera), on the other, try to widen the consensus around the new dynasty.⁹ From this point of view, the Visconti policy had moved away from its initial direction. If at the start, with Ottone and Matteo, the *signori* had clashed now with the nobles, now with the *popolari*, later the Visconti were aiming more decisively for an understanding with the nobility, marginalizing the organization of the *popolo*, which was guilty of having supported the second Torriana *signoria* in the city (1302–1308). Galeazzo I's decision to abolish the *paratici* (guilds) in 1326, for example, apparently followed this line: at one blow the *dominus* struck the *Societas Populi* (and the artisans who constituted it), and pleased the rich merchants who, above all in the woollen and textile sector, viewed with favour a liberalization of the relations of production. In reality, in succeeding decades the Milanese artisan corporations were again recognized, but they no longer had any political role and their position within the economic structures of the city remained subordinate to that of the merchants, who were now chosen as privileged interlocutors of the Visconti.¹⁰ Favoured in their relations with the other Milanese guilds and tempted by the prospects of a market made

9 Guido Cariboni, Comunicazione simbolica; Federica Cengarle, *Les maestà all'ombra del biscione. Dalle città lombarde ad una "monarchia" europea*, (Rome 2014).

10 Francesco Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 696ff.

supraregional by Visconti expansionism, the Ambrosian *mercatores* then found reasons to support the dynasty in the opportunities for profit represented by state finances (for example, the farm of offices as treasurers, at court and in the subject cities). With some moments of tension—as evidenced by the conspiracy of the Pusterla in 1340—the Milanese aristocracy also ended up supporting the Visconti initiative, backing their plans for conquests. Moreover, the Visconti knew well how to reward those who backed them: fiscal immunities, lands, jurisdiction, even ecclesiastical offices were distributed to their protégés and associates.

Indeed, this relation with local ecclesiastical institutions appears to have been crucial for the Visconti: if the archiepiscopal office served as a trampoline for the ascent of Ottone, the rich temporalities of the Ambrosian episcopal endowment were despoiled in succeeding decades and its archive destroyed, so as to erase the memory of the rights of the Church. But not only was the property of the Church (lands, castles, fiscal rights) plundered. The principal offices and ecclesiastical benefices of the dominion soon came into the sights of the Visconti and their protégés. Because of the schism and the ambiguous behaviour of the Visconti with respect to the requests for obedience coming from Rome and Avignon, the Roman pontiffs—in whose orbit the church of the dominion had remained *de facto*—showed themselves readily inclined to accede to the requests for appointments to ecclesiastical offices and benefices coming from Gian Galeazzo. Nor did ducal control in the matter of benefices fade away in the fifteenth century, when the fortunes of the conciliar and post-conciliar Church gave more room for other protagonists (the great Lombard families, who often had their own agents in the Roman court, some powerful members of the curia, et cetera), but without compromising the influence and the mediating role of the duke (who in the person of Francesco Sforza even succeeded in obtaining a cardinal's hat for his son Ascanio).¹¹

From this perspective, the crisis that convulsed the entire state in 1402 following the unexpected death of the first duke, Gian Galeazzo, seems to reveal—in Milan as elsewhere in the state—the fragility of the Visconti political construct, with the revival of factional struggles, and the clashes between the great aristocratic groups. It was only following the death of Duke Filippo Maria in 1447, when the extinction of the dynasty provoked a constitutional

11 Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo*, pp. 69ff.; Giorgio Chittolini (ed.), *Gli Sforza, la Chiesa lombarda, la corte di Roma. Strutture e pratiche beneficarie nel ducato di Milano (1450–1535)* (Napoli 1989). For a synthesis, see Giorgio Chittolini, “The Papacy and the Italian States”, in Andrea Gamberini and Isabella Lazzarini (eds.), *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge 2012), pp. 467–489.

crisis in the state, however, that in Milan the idea arose of renewing a form of self-government which, under the resounding name of the Ambrosian Republic, imitated the old communal order. Discourses and speeches made then revealed the discontent felt during the government of the last duke: with his strongly authoritarian ways, oppressive taxation, even control of the marriages of the major aristocratic families. What emerged clearly was the desire of the Milanese to reappropriate the civic political space (the Visconti had up till then reserved for themselves the right to nominate the members of the councils) and to make it the foundation for a regional projection of power. The basis of the plan, in fact, was the maintenance of a wide dominion, following the boundaries of the duchy but with the keystone being not the ducal dynasty, but rather the commune of Milan. A commune, that is, which finally would make itself dominant over other cities and territories, following the model of Florence and, at least in part, that of Venice, by which Florentines and Venetians had succeeded in assuming the role of state patriciates.¹²

The advent of the new Sforza dynasty in 1450 not only nullified these projects, but brought to the fore again all the causes for dissatisfaction of the Milanese. With the eclipse of the Ambrosian Republic, the Ambrosian elites had to settle with Francesco Sforza, the ambitious captain of fortune who had married Bianca Maria, the only daughter of Filippo Maria, and had conquered the state in arms. A man of great pragmatism, Sforza immediately sent a signal to the citizens of Milan by ordering the reconstruction of the city fortress of Porta Giovia, that they had dismantled during the Ambrosian Republic because it was perceived as an instrument of oppression and menace.¹³ For the Milanese it was a return to the past. Certainly, even during the Sforza era, Milan as the capital continued to enjoy a series of privileges in taxation and food-supply compared to other cities of the duchy. Nevertheless, these privileges in no way compensated Milanese citizens for the loss of self-government of the commune and for the failure to be recognized as the governing class of the state. This was an aspect that can be observed by analysing the profile of those who came over time to be favoured by the dukes with fiefs and exemptions (among whom there were not many Milanese), and also the social origins of officials in the dominion. The growth of the state indeed made necessary the constitution of a complex apparatus of offices and officials which, at court and in the subject cities and territories, provided for the needs of government. But if at

12 Marina Spinelli, *Milano nel Quattrocento: la città, la società, il ducato attraverso gli atti dei notai milanesi* (Milano 1998), pp. 79ff.

13 Patrick Boucheron, *Le pouvoir de bâtir. Urbanisme et politique éditariale à Milan, XIV^e–XV^e siècles* (Paris 1998), pp. 208ff.

the start of the Visconti expansion the major offices on the periphery of the dominion (*podesterie*, captaincies, vicariates) were the exclusive appanage of members of the Visconti extended family and of illustrious Milanese lineages, at least from the second half of the fourteenth century provincial aristocracies (that is, from the cities that had come to be part of the dominion) also became involved in the administration of the state: a move that, on the one hand, aimed to promote the integration of various territorial bodies into the dominion, but on the other made evident the marginality of the Milanese. As Giorgio Chittolini has observed, the Visconti and then the Sforza swung between condescension and benevolence towards the Ambrosian elites, without losing sight of the idea that the dynasty—and not the city of Milan—should be the meeting-point for the many social and political forces of the state.¹⁴

In the long run, therefore, the policy of the Visconti and then the Sforza ended by discontenting many and varied sectors of Milanese society, from the popular classes to the great noble lineages, from the Guelfs to the Ghibellines themselves (even though the Visconti were their leaders). From this came revolts, now of one group, now of another, with the assassination of two dukes (Giovanni Maria Visconti in 1412, Galeazzo Maria Sforza in 1476), but without there being recognizable, behind these recurring ferments, any project coherently pursued over time and capable of bringing together disparate forces. It would indeed be misguided to read the tensions between the dynasty and the Milanese as conflict between the signorial government and a city still attached to the values of an abstract communalism.¹⁵

If anything, what can be observed is that this divergence between the dynasty and the Milanese elites was dramatically heightened from the 1470s. From the words of the chroniclers and from other contemporary testimonies appears more and more strongly the impatience of the Ambrosian elites not just with ducal authoritarianism, and with ever more onerous taxation, but also with the many *parvenus* who prospered at court (the powerful secretary Cicco Simonetta, from Calabria, comes to mind), accused of usurping roles and positions that the Milanese felt were their own. The reform of the *Consiglio*

14 Chittolini, *Città, comunità, feudi*, pp. 167ff.

15 The thesis of a revival of communalism is advanced by Paolo Grillo, "The long life of the Popolo of Milan. Revolts against the Visconti in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries", in Samuel Kline Cohn Jr., Fabrizio Ricciardelli (eds.), *The Culture of Violence in Renaissance Italy* (Firenze, 2012), pp. 225–240. But see the comments of Marco Gentile, "La ricostruzione del ducato da parte di Filippo Maria Visconti dal 1412 ai primi anni Venti", in Federica Cengarle, Nadia Covini (eds.), *Seicento anni dall'inizio del ducato di Filippo Maria Visconti. Economia, politica, cultura*, forthcoming.

segreto instigated by Galeazzo Maria Sforza in 1475 in this sense is revelatory of the duke's attitude. In this most exclusive assembly—or, at least, at its highest level, that called on to assist the duke in affairs of state—there was only one member of the Milanese aristocracy.

But discontent was not limited to the role of the Milanese or to the increasingly burdensome taxes. The style of government, ever more authoritarian and ever less oriented to the *bonum commune*, was also under attack. Even the administration of justice, the pillar of every form of political community, became for the duke above all an instrument with which to extort money from the most wealthy.¹⁶ No wonder, then, that in 1483 yet another conspiracy against the duke, that planned by Luigi Vimercati, should have been discovered.

In this scenario of tensions and conflicts, the early stages of the Italian Wars appeared a litmus test of the estrangement between the elites and the dynasty. When in 1499 il Moro was the victim of his own vacillating foreign policy and was overwhelmed by the arrival of the French, part of the Ambrosian elites openly sided with the newcomers (Gian Giacomo Trivulzio commanded the French troops!), while not a few Milanese in the years to come were attracted to another power interested in spreading to the Ambrosian city, the Swiss. Divided internally, wavering in their attitude towards the invaders, the Milanese elites once again failed to come together behind a common project: in a word, to make themselves the governing class. It was, rather, the *popolo* who showed in these circumstances some wish for municipal solidarity, in the first place with the aim of protecting the interests of the citizens. The constitution—longed for in vain throughout the Visconti and Sforza era—of municipal representative organs, elected by the *cives*, with tax affairs above all within their competence, was finally agreed by the new French authorities, without this implying greater involvement of the Ambrosian elites in the decision-making processes of the state. The transfer of the nerve centre over the Alps, to where the king was with his council, had the effect of further marginalizing the Milanese, nullifying the possibilities of social ascent traditionally linked to the presence of the court. The very officials sent by Louis XII to govern the duchy—from the chancellor to the treasurer, to the military commanders—were French or, at any rate, not Lombards, with the exception of Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, the first lieutenant of the king, who held office only for a year. As for the Senate, instituted by Louis XII as the supreme organ of justice in the state and with

16 Maria Nadia Covini, *“La bilancia drita”. Pratiche di governo, leggi e ordinamenti nel ducato sforzesco* (Milano 2007), pp. 259ff.; Franca Leverotti, *“Governare a modo e stillo de’ Signori”. Osservazioni in margine all’amministrazione della giustizia al tempo di Galeazzo Maria Sforza duca di Milano (1466–76)* (Firenze 1994).

potential representative functions, both social (there were aristocrats, high clergy and citizens) and territorial (almost all the provinces were represented there), initially very few Milanese were among its members.¹⁷

In conclusion, if it is beyond doubt that the French king's policy sought to confront the points around which there had been conflict between the Milanese and the ducal dynasty, such as justice or taxation, it is nonetheless clear that the conditions which might have allowed the Ambrosian elites to become not only the local governing class, but also that of the region and the state, had long ceased to exist.¹⁸

The Construction of a Regional State: The Age of the Visconti

In 1317 the papal legates Bernard Gui and Bertrand De la Tour reported to the pope the results of an investigation conducted in Lombardy, where in the opinion of the many laymen and clerics interviewed, the region would be able to find peace only under a local (not foreign) dynasty, capable of making itself loved through its good government.¹⁹ The testimony, still more precious in that it comes from a source not suspect of support for such political designs, illustrates well the climate within which could be accomplished the rise and projection on a regional scale of some Lombard *signorie*, beginning with those—soon to become competitors—of the Visconti (in western Lombardy) and the Della Scala (in eastern Lombardy). Favouring the creation of wider, more integrated, political spaces, were economic reasons; the economy was at that time still in full expansion, but obstructed in its development by the intense political instability.²⁰

It was, therefore, aided by these circumstances that Matteo Visconti, following the death of Henry VII (1313), succeeded in becoming *signore* over a group of other cities, Bergamo, Tortona, Alessandria and Vercelli, besides Milan. This was not all. In these same years his son Galeazzo succeeded in establishing

17 Letizia Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia. Ricerche sull'aristocrazia padana nel Rinascimento* (Milano 2003), pp. 140ff.

18 Stefano Meschini, *Luigi XII duca di Milano. Gli uomini e le istituzioni del primo dominio francese (1499–1512)* (Milano 2004); Letizia Arcangeli (ed.), *Milano e Luigi XII. Ricerche sul primo dominio francese in Lombardia (1499–1512)* (Milano 2002); Philippe Contamine and Jean Guillaume (eds.), *Louis XII en Milanais* (Paris 2003).

19 The report of this embassy has been published by Sigmund Riezler, *Vatikanische Akten zur deutschen Geschichte in der Zeit Kaiser Ludwigs des Baiers* (Monaco 1891), pp. 36ff.

20 Francesco Somaini, "Processi costitutivi", pp. 728ff.

his government over Piacenza and, if only briefly, over Cremona as well, while pro-Visconti regimes were installed in Como, Novara and Pavia. At this stage, the dominion in reality still had little unity: it was, rather, a composite aggregation, made up of individual cities that recognized their subjection to the same lord, and of others that, formally independent, gravitated around the Visconti. On the whole, rather weakly co-ordinated, as was clear when it was confronted by the great anti-Visconti offensive launched by John XXII from 1317. Guilty of obstructing the expansionist designs of the pope in Lombardy, the Visconti were hit by a particularly determined response, which envisaged recourse to ecclesiastical censures (excommunication, the equation of Ghibellinism with heresy, the proclamation of a crusade against them²¹) and which produced in the course of some years the dismembering of the dominion. In fact, when in 1329 Azzone Visconti obtained from Ludwig of Bavaria the diploma as Imperial vicar for Milan, all the previously subject cities had been lost: even the Ambrosian *contado* then swarmed with lords and communities independent of the urban centre and its *signori*.²²

The broad Guelf alliance mobilized by the pope against the Visconti—which at some moments numbered among its members personages of the greatest prominence, such as Philippe de Valois, brother of the king of France, and Robert of Anjou, King of Naples—did not, however, succeed in producing new and stable equilibria. On the contrary, the long struggle between John XXII and Ludwig of Bavaria and the contemporaneous weakening of the Ghibelline front offered King John of Bohemia the opportunity to descend into Italy and to receive the *signoria* of a large number of cities, from Brescia to Cremona, from Como to Pavia, from Novara to Vercelli, as far as Parma, Reggio and Lucca.²³

So it was in this context that Azzone Visconti, after having been part of the league that drove John of Bohemia back over the Alps, set about the patient restoration of the dominion. Pro-Visconti factions still existed in all the principal cities near Milan, as was clearly revealed in the inquisitorial proceedings of 1322–3, when together with the Visconti their numerous allies were also condemned as heretics. Soon not only was the entire *contado* of Milan subjected to the Visconti again, but also the cities of Bergamo (1332), Cremona (1334), Como, Vercelli, Lodi (1335), and Piacenza (1336). Even Brescia, which

21 Sylvain Parent, “Tirannica pravitas. I poteri signorili tra tirannia ed eresia. Riflessioni sulla documentazione pontificia (XIII–XIV secolo)”, in Andrea Zorzi (ed.), *Tiranni e tirannide nel Trecento italiano*, (Rome 2013), pp. 119–142.

22 Andrea Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo*, pp. 161ff.

23 Carla Dumontel, *L'impresa italiana di Giovanni di Lussemburgo re di Boemia* (Cuneo 1953).

Mastino II Della Scala was also keen to have, fell into the hands of the Visconti (1337), and the subsequent efforts of the *signore* of Verona, who fomented and financed the rebellion against Azzone of his cousin Lodrisio Visconti, came to nothing. The defeat of Lodrisio at Parabiago in 1339 marked the definitive containment of Della Scala ambitions in western Lombardy and the indisputable primacy of the *signori* of Milan. In the time of Luchino and then of his brother Giovanni, Archbishop of Milan, the dominion was further enlarged, until it comprised Locarno, Bellinzona and the Alto Ticino, and south-western Piedmont (Alessandria, Tortona, Alba, Cuneo, Mondovì et cetera). Some years later and the very wealthy marketplaces of Bologna and Genoa were made subject to the Visconti.²⁴

The death of Giovanni—who like his ancestor Ottone had been archbishop and *signore*—marked the end of the first great phase of expansion (1354). The following decades—when the brothers Galeazzo II and Bernabò, Giovanni's nephews, were in government—saw a settlement of the dominion, with the loss of the most recent conquests (Genoa and Bologna, part of south-western Piedmont), and the conquest of Pavia (1359) and Reggio (1371). The new element in the Visconti policy of these years was, if anything, the effort to bring the lineage into the Gotha of international aristocracy through costly matrimonial unions. In 1360 Gian Galeazzo, son of Galeazzo II, married Isabelle de Valois, daughter of the king of France, John II. The marriage cost the Visconti a colossal sum, between 400,000 and 600,000 scudi: for this sum, according to the indignant reaction of the Florentine chronicler Matteo Villani (*Cronica*, Book IX, Chap. CIII), had the king of France sold his own flesh and blood. It is worth observing that relations with the French royal house were consolidated in the next generation, when Valentina, daughter of Gian Galeazzo, was the bride of the king's brother, Louis, duke of Orléans (1392).²⁵

If the branch of Galeazzo II was forming connections above all in France and England (Violante, Gian Galeazzo's sister, married the Duke of Clarence, son of King Edward III) the branch of Bernabò cultivated relations with the

24 Francesco Cognasso, "L'unificazione della Lombardia sotto Milano", in *Storia di Milano*, v (Milano 1955), pp. 253ff.

25 Georges Peyronnet, "The distant origins of the Italian Wars: political relations between France and Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries", in David Abulafia (ed.), *The French Descent into Renaissance Italy, 1494–95: Antecedents and Effects* (Aldershot 1995), pp. 29–53, 31–2.

German world, making marriage alliances with the houses of Wurttemberg, Habsburg, Wittelsbach and Hohenzollern.²⁶

Ready to support one another on the Italian stage and to divide up areas of influence in Europe, the brothers Galeazzo II and Bernabò nevertheless developed a growing rivalry, that the division of the dominion into two distinct areas (the former got the western part, the latter the eastern, while Milan was governed by both) had not diminished. To signal his own autonomy, Galeazzo II moved to Pavia, making it his own capital, holding a sumptuous court there (where Petrarch was his guest) and founding a *Studium Generale*.²⁷

The tensions between the two branches of the family exploded on the death of Galeazzo II, when intervention by Bernabò prevented Gian Galeazzo marrying Maria, heiress of the Sicilian crown. Within a brief period, not only did the young Gian Galeazzo see his own regal ambitions vanish, but he also found himself increasingly bound to his uncle, who, strong in his own ascendancy, succeeded in marrying his nephew Gian Galeazzo and his niece Violante to his own children Caterina and Ludovico (1380): in one blow Bernabò laid the foundations for the reunification of the dominion and affirmed his primacy as *maior* in the *domus*.²⁸

Clasped in an ever more binding embrace, Gian Galeazzo decided that the time had come to rid himself of Bernabò and in 1385, having drawn his uncle into a trap, had him arrested and imprisoned: from that moment the dominion once more had a single *signore*.

The era of Gian Galeazzo represents from many points of view the apex of the fortunes of the Milanese state, in which the dominion assumed a new, firmer constitutional form and the borders opened up to engulf a large part of northern and central Italy. A series of victorious military campaigns led from the late 1380s to the acquisition of all the Scaligeri dominions in the Veronese Marca, and then successively of Pisa, Siena, Perugia and Bologna. With difficulty the *signoria* of the Gonzaga over Mantua maintained its autonomy, and Florence was equally lucky, being saved from the Visconti siege only by the unforeseen death of Gian Galeazzo.

In parallel, the institutional apparatus also expanded, assuming the physiognomy which it would retain—if with some adjustments—in the following

26 Peter Rückert, Sönke Lorenz, Robert Kretzschmar (eds.), *Kulturtransfer im Spätmittelalter: Die Visconti und der Deutsche Südwesten* (Ostfildern 2008).

27 Luciano Gargan, "La cultura umanistica a Pavia in età viscontea", *Bollettino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria*, CVII (2007), pp. 159–209.

28 Andrea Gamberini, "Gian Galeazzo Visconti", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 54 (Roma 2000), pp. 383–391.

decades. Assisting the duke in governing were the secretaries and chancellors, with the justice and privy councils, which in the late fourteenth century were coming into being and which continued to function until the major reforms at the end of the fifteenth century, when Louis XII, King of France and the new Duke of Milan, put in place “the concentration of the most important political functions, formerly exercised by the *Consiglio segreto*, the *Consiglio di giustizia* and the chanceries dealing with political affairs, crime and benefices in one sole organ, the Senate, and in its President, the Chancellor”.²⁹

At the head of the financial administration were the *maestri generali* of ordinary and of extraordinary revenues, based at Milan and Pavia respectively. If from the early days of the *signoria* every city and territory of the dominion paid the *signore* a fixed sum, called the *salarium domini*, and kept the rest for itself, from 1385 all the ordinary revenues (in general levied through customs and tolls) were arrogated to the Camera, while the weight of extraordinary revenues, which the territorial bodies collected sometimes through the *estimo* [property tax], sometimes through additional tolls, became increasingly frequent and onerous.³⁰

The most extensive revision of the statutes of the subject cities dates from the era of Gian Galeazzo: his predecessors had already reserved the right to confirm and emend the multitude of local customs, but no one had ever undertaken such a wide-reaching action. Although the modifications made were in general modest, the political significance of the operation was very great.

Aware that broad alterations to the institutional architecture of the dominion and redefinition of relations with his subjects could happen only within a more solid frame of legitimacy, Gian Galeazzo confronted, once and for all, the question of the bases of Visconti power. At the cost of 300,000 gold florins he got from the King of the Romans, Wenceslas (1395) the grant of the title of duke, in a heritable form, rendering superfluous that transfer of sovereignty from the individual civic communities which had up to then always been observed, despite the Visconti having for some time been recognized as imperial vicars.³¹ The event was a true watershed in Italian history, and not only Italian: while the Visconti could now claim full and absolute sovereignty within the confines of the dominion, inaugurating a race for the title in which

29 Franca Leverotti, “La cancelleria segreta da Ludovico il Moro a Luigi XII”, in Letizia Arcangeli (ed.), *Milano e Luigi XII*, p. 252.

30 Patrizia Mainoni, *Le radici della discordia. Ricerche sulla fiscalità a Bergamo tra il XIII e XV secolo* (Milano 1997).

31 Jane Black, “Giangaleazzo Visconti and the Ducal Title”, in John E. Law, Bernadette Paton (eds.), *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Farnham 2010), pp. 119–130.

in the fifteenth century other *signori*, such as the Gonzaga, Savoia and Este participated, Wenceslas was deposed by the German princes for having injured the *honor Imperii*. Swift as the ascent of Gian Galeazzo had been, the decline of the state after his death was just as rapid. The crisis in which the unexpected death of Gian Galeazzo (1402) precipitated the state turned out to be particularly acute: if in Milan the claims of Bernabò's heirs were intertwined with the ambitions of those courtiers who sought to orient the decisions of the regency council that flanked the very young Giovanni Maria, on the periphery of the dominion all the claims of those forces (factions, great families of the territorial aristocracy, urban elites, et cetera) that the first duke of Milan had held in check were liberated.³² The masters in those years were above all the great *condottieri* who had fought for the Visconti (such as Ottobuono Terzi, Facino Cane, and Pandolfo Malatesta) and who now divided up the spoils of the dominion.³³ It fell to Gian Galeazzo's second son, Filippo Maria, who came to power in 1412, to begin the reconstruction of the state, sometimes by agreement, sometimes by conquest. Some territories, such as those near Venice or in Tuscany, proved in reality to be lost for ever, yet by 1420 the historic nucleus of the state could be said to have been reconstituted, thanks in part to his marriage with the widow of Facino Cane, which brought back to the Visconti many places between Lombardy and Piedmont. Even Genoa temporarily became Visconti again in 1421, while the following year, with the victory against the forest cantons at Arbedo, the duke of Milan recovered control of the Alto Ticino and above all of the Gothard and Lucomagno passes (territories which would remain under Milan until almost the end of the century, even if at the cost of very onerous customs concessions to the Swiss).³⁴

New problems arose from the second half of the 1420s, when the Serenissima, which had already deprived the Visconti of dominions that had been Scaligeri and Carraresi, pushed westwards, conquering Bergamo and Brescia. Extending in the Terraferma from the Adriatic Sea to the River Adda—and which included

32 Francesco Cognasso, *Il Ducato visconteo da Gian Galeazzo a Filippo Maria*, in *Storia di Milano*, VI (Milano 1955), pp. 68–152; Carlo Giulio Zimolo, *Il ducato di Giovanni Maria Visconti*, in *Scritti storici e giuridici in memoria di Alessandro Visconti* (Milano 1955), pp. 389–440.

33 On the role of the *condottieri* in these years see Giorgio Chittolini, Elisabetta Conti, Maria Nadia Covini (eds.), *Nell'età di Pandolfo Malatesta. Signore a Bergamo, Brescia, Fano agli inizi del Quattrocento* (Brescia 2012), in particular the essays of Chittolini and Covini.

34 Maria Nadia Covini, Federica Cengarle (eds.), *Seicento anni dall'inizio del ducato di Filippo Maria Visconti (1412–1447). Economia, politica, cultura*, forthcoming; Andrea Gamberini, "Il ducato di Milano e gli Svyceri: uno sguardo d'insieme", in *Bollettino della società storica locarnese*, 16 (2013), pp. 13–29.

some of the richest and most populous cities of the time—Venice was rapidly becoming the most powerful of the Italian states.

To defend the duchy, Filippo Maria had enrolled some of the most famous captains of fortune of the time, from Carmagnola to Francesco Sforza, and to the latter he had given his only daughter, Bianca Maria, in marriage.³⁵ To have their own state was the dream of every *condottiero*, so that when in 1447 Filippo Maria died without heirs and the Ambrosian Republic was formed in Milan, the Sforza, after having fought for the Republic for a while, and then for Venice, launched an offensive to recover, one place after another, one community after another, the entire dominion, frustrating the claims of the Orléans (by virtue of descent from Valentina Visconti), the King of Naples, Alfonso of Aragon (to whom according to tradition Filippo Maria granted the succession in a codicil to his will), the Savoia (through the marriage of Filippo Maria to Maria di Savoia) and the Emperor Frederick III (who considered the duchy devolved to the Empire for lack of heirs). Disappointing all these claimants, on 26 February 1450 the ambassadors of the Ambrosian Republic resigned themselves to offering the ducal title to Francesco Sforza.³⁶

From the Reconstruction of the Duchy to the End of Independence: The Era of the Sforza

Like many other *condottieri* of his time, Francesco Sforza was not of noble descent. True, his father, Muzio degli Attendoli, known as Sforza (for his strength or, by some accounts, his arrogance), had attained, by virtue of his extraordinary gifts as a commander, the title of Great Constable of the Kingdom of Naples. And yet the lack of a proper aristocratic pedigree was something that would surface periodically in the history of the family, a kind of stain that the haughty aristocracy of the time considered indelible. The prosperous—but not noble—condition of the Attendoli, rich landholders in the village of Cotignola, in the Romagna, became in the mouths of detractors the synonym of a *rusticitas* incompatible with any attempt at ennoblement. “Peasant from Cotignola”: that was how Pope John XXIII defined Muzio after the *condottiero*’s decision to break off his relation with the pope (who had, amongst other things, created him conte di Cotignola) to serve King Ladislas. And the same

35 Maria Nadia Covini, *Donne, emozioni e potere alla corte degli Sforza: da Bianca Maria a Cecilia Gallerani* (Milano 2012), pp. 11ff.

36 A full account in Maria Nadia Covini, *L'esercito del duca. Organizzazione militare e istituzioni al tempo degli Sforza (1450–1480)* (Roma 1997), pp. 37ff.

epithet would be used of Ludovico il Moro at the end of the fifteenth century by his great adversary Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, marshal of the king of France, and above all member of an ancient Milanese family.

Received in Milan with mistrust because of the way in which he had conquered the state (and the capital in particular, which had been starved into surrender), derided by the local elites for his modest origins, Francesco Sforza then had a problem with legitimacy because the emperor refused to recognize his title of duke. From this point of view, the indult granted by Pope Nicholas v between the end of 1450 and the beginning of 1451 was precious: in the agreement, which formally regulated just the matter of benefices, the ducal dignity of Sforza was recognized *de facto*.³⁷

The Peace of Lodi, which in 1454 put an end to hostilities with Venice, establishing the border on the River Adda, and the constitution of the Italian League in the following year (with the adhesion of, besides Venice, the Kingdom of Naples, Florence, the pope, the marchese d'Este, and others, all ready to undertake to maintain the *status quo* in the peninsula and prevent new wars), represented opportunities for Sforza to consolidate his status on the international stage, notwithstanding the continued resistance of the Empire to the dynasty (which was overcome only in 1494, when Ludovico il Moro, thanks to his friendship with Maximilian, obtained the longed-for title). Consistent with this policy of seeking for approval on the international stage, were the close relations with the king of France, from whom in 1464 Francesco had Genoa in fief and to whom in 1466, at the time of the rebellion of some princes, he sent in aid a contingent under the command of his son Galeazzo Maria, who succeeded to the dukedom that same year on the death of his father.

The real element of continuity in Sforza policy in those decades appears to have been the powerful secretary Cicco Simonetta, to whom Francesco had given the task of reconstructing the chancery and who was capable of influencing the choices of the dukes. In particular, after the assassination of the authoritarian Galeazzo Maria in 1476, and the succession of his son Gian Galeazzo, barely six years old, Simonetta's role became more open, and the other sons of Francesco Sforza, who had hoped for a different settlement for the state, were ranged against him. It was Ludovico, called il Moro, who took the initiative and directed the transition: in 1480 he dissolved the regency council set up after Galeazzo Maria's death, separated Bona di Savoia from her son Gian Galeazzo, assumed the guardianship of the boy himself, and on dubious grounds, had Cicco Simonetta tried and decapitated.

37 Michele Ansani, "La provvista dei benefici (1450–1466). Strumenti e limiti dell'intervento ducale", in Giorgio Chittolini (ed.), *Gli Sforza, la Chiesa lombarda*, pp. 1–114.

During the era of il Moro, Milan became one of the principal courts of the Renaissance, thanks also to Sforza's ability to attract there artists such as Leonardo and Bramante, who found a particularly receptive environment in the city. With great emphasis—but not without some foundation—the poet Bernardo Bellincioni could write in 1493: “Come to the modern Athens, Milan, where is Ludovico, our Parnassus.”³⁸

The other side of the coin of il Moro's politics of magnificence was the by now structural financial crisis of the duchy, which measures such as the sale of offices and magistracies—according to a policy that was not new, but was now pursued with more determination—did not succeed in resolving. Aggravating the situation were the extraordinary expenses to support the duke of Ferrara, Ercole d'Este, in the war against Venice (1482–84), and the king of Naples, Ferdinando of Aragon, against the rebellious barons (1485–6), or those for the prodigious dowry of Bianca Maria Sforza, promised to the King of the Romans, Maximilian (from whom came, for a payment of a further 100,000 ducats, the longed-for ducal title). Not to mention the very high costs of maintaining the court, which had expanded enormously compared to that of the Visconti era, and which according to the estimated budget for 1476 absorbed 45 per cent of the state revenues!³⁹

Although on the brink of financial collapse and undermined by the disaffection of the elites of the duchy—beginning, as has been seen, with the Milanese—Moro's government was overturned not by internal politics, but by the repercussions of his choices in foreign policy, his vacillation between France and Venice in the years that saw the king of France descend into the peninsula to occupy the kingdom of Naples.

If the descent of the Most Christian King had undermined the Italian equilibrium, his death had direct repercussions on the duchy of Milan. The line of Valois-Anjou having died out with Charles VIII, Louis XII, of the line of Valois-Orlèans, came to the throne: that is, that branch of the royal line that claimed rights over the duchy of Milan by reason of descent from Valentina Visconti, the daughter of Gian Galeazzo who had married Louis of Orlèans in 1392. Within the space of a few months the new sovereign moved from claims to action: first he promoted an anti-Sforza league comprising the pope, Venice and the duke of Savoy as well, and then invaded the duchy. In 1499, besieged

38 Luciano Patetta (ed.), *Bramante e la sua cerchia a Milano e in Lombardia, 1480–1500* (Milano 2001); quotation, p. 77.

39 Franca Leverotti, “La crisi finanziaria del ducato di Milano alla fine del Quattrocento”, in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, vol. 2 (Milano 1983), pp. 585–632; Francesco Somaini, “Processi costitutivi”, p. 766; Giorgio Chittolini, *Città, comunità, feudi*, pp. 145ff.

on all fronts, Ludovico il Moro had to abandon the capital to the French troops commanded by Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, a member of a Milanese family of ancient and noble origin. His attempt to recover power in 1500 did not succeed, and Ludovico was taken as a prisoner to France, where he died not long after.⁴⁰

The real “key to Italy”, the duchy of Milan soon became the object of the expansionist ambitions not only of the French, but also of the Swiss and above all of the Empire, where the death of Maximilian (1519) enhanced an extraordinary concentration of power in the person of his grandson, elected Emperor with the title of Charles V, but at the same time king of Castile and Aragon, duke of Burgundy and duke of Austria.

For the duchy of Milan the Italian Wars marked the end of independence, despite two brief Sforza restorations in 1512–1515 (with Massimiliano) and then in 1521–1535 (with Francesco II), the first supported by the Swiss with Cardinal Schiner, the second by the Emperor, who became ever more master of the political scene. When in 1535 the last exponent of the Sforza dynasty died without heirs, the state of Milan returned to the Empire by devolution. Compared to its apogee at the very beginning of the fifteenth century, the state had become notably smaller, especially from the end of the fifteenth century: the Swiss had got the Alto Ticino (the Leventina in 1478, Bellinzona and the Blenio valley in 1503, Lugano and Locarno in 1513), and the Grisons had got the Valtellina and the Valchiavenna (1512), while the cities and territories of Parma and Piacenza had gone to the pope (1521).

Constitutional Arrangements and Organization of the Territory

From the 1970s, the studies of Giorgio Chittolini have identified in the plurality of social and territorial bodies present within the borders of the dominion, one of the distinctive characteristics of the state in the later Middle Ages. This refers to those cities, communities, townships, fiefs, lords of castles and factions, capable of useful dialogue with the prince and of gaining institutional recognition, bodies which recently have been the subject of much research.⁴¹

40 Michael Mallett and Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars* (Harlow 2012); Stefano Meschini, *La Francia nel ducato di Milano*, I, (Milano 2006); Letizia Arcangeli (ed.), *Milano e Luigi XII*; Giorgio Chittolini, “Milan in the face of the Italian wars”, in Abulafia (ed.), *The French Descent into Renaissance Italy*, pp. 391–404.

41 Giorgio Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi*; Giorgio Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado. Secoli XIV–XV* (Torino 1979); Andrea Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo*; Marco Gentile, *Terra e poteri. Parma e il Parmense nel Ducato visconteo*

Not all these actors were new; in reality, some dated at least from the communal era. But if at that time the city-states had in general succeeded in controlling them, extending their own jurisdiction over a large part of the *contado*, the advent of the regional state risked opening up the game again and altering the equilibria. In the contest that had been going on for centuries between city and *contado*, a new element had been inserted, the *signore*, to whom the various actors looked with contrasting expectations: the *civitates*, to see their own fiscal and jurisdictional primacy over the *contado* reaffirmed, the remaining territorial bodies (communities, townships, lordships, et cetera) to obtain immunities and concessions that would permit them to loosen as much as possible their dependence on the urban centre.

Historians have long debated the fourteenth and fifteenth-century settlements, especially in relation to the maintenance of civic primacy over the territory. This was a thesis dear to Italian historians, who, in the wake of Carlo Cattaneo's studies in the nineteenth century, kept to the theory of the survival from the Roman era of territorial blocks focused on urban centres, a kind of structural element over a very long period, on which, not by chance, the "grand narrative" of Italian history has been constructed. All things considered, the image of a regional state built up from a number of cities with their respective *contadi* still has explanatory power today: besides, detachments of territory (following wars or treaties) generally involved blocks constituted of civic districts. But the object of debate today is not the existence of these blocks, but their internal organization, which made them more like perforated bricks than solid ones.⁴²

A closer look at the conduct of the Visconti and the Sforza, while revealing varying orientations, nevertheless shows a decided inclination to undo and redefine the arrangements polarized by the cities up until then.

The first step, already from the 1340s, happened with the creation of a new network of officials in the *contado*, the vicars, invested with prerogatives of jurisdiction that in some cases amounted to *mero et misto imperio*.

Sent into the major rural centres—but sometimes into smaller places too—they not only satisfied the Visconti requirement to control the territory, but also the need for self-government and institutional visibility of those territorial

all'inizio del Quattrocento (Milano 2001); Marco Gentile, "Aristocrazia signorile e costituzione del ducato visconteo-sforzesco. Appunti e problemi di ricerca", in Marco Gentile, Pierre Savy (eds.), *Noblesse et états princiers en Italie et en France au xv^e siècle* (Rome 2009), pp. 125–155.

42 Andrea Gamberini, *Oltre le città. Assetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo medioevo* (Roma 2009).

bodies—townships and communities—whose growth had been in some cases very vigorous between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: centres which in the administrative geography designed by the Visconti finally saw the opportunity to construct a new political hierarchy in the territory, which placed them at the top of political spaces whose borders did not match those of the old and often obsolete districts, but were the expression of existing equilibria and dynamics. The stable presence *in loco* of a judicial official—on whom the inhabitants could always exert some form of pressure, even if he was always nominated by the *dominus*—was in fact perceived by the members of the communities as the most effective form of safeguard in relation to a form of justice otherwise sensitive to the interests of competing territorial bodies.

In some cases, the fullness of the powers of jurisdiction of the office of vicar (that in the fifteenth century often had the title of *podestà*) was the first step in the direction of real jurisdictional separation from the city of the community that was the seat of the vicariate, with the creation of an autonomous district extending over the surrounding territory as well: this was a phenomenon that, in the course of the fifteenth century, would take place in nearly all the *contadi* of the Po valley, rewarding the ambitions of rapidly growing communities, some of which became, for the number of their inhabitants and their economic importance, “quasi cities” (the status of *civitas* belonged only to centres which were also seats of a bishopric).

Among the best known instances of this were the large townships of Treviglio, Vigevano, and Borgo San Donnino, but the phenomenon of separation of jurisdictions assumed in some areas, as for example in the Cremonese, such proportions as to compromise the very survival of an extensive civic district.

The *signori* of Milan felt so little bound to the idea of the jurisdictional geography centred on cities that in time they decided to make new and still more invasive interventions, promoting or recognizing broad supralocal communities, with the character of federations, detached from the urban districts and made collectively responsible for functions previously monopolized by the city. This brought into being entities who were governed by their own councils—representing smaller communities—to whom were delegated interaction with the state in matters of taxation, of protection of the territory’s privileges and of the organization of military defence (regulation of access to the resources of the territory, distribution of the tax burden among families, the settlement of quarrels that might arise between neighbours over such matters and so on, remained the prerogative of the local communities). Sometimes this followed traditional lines, through recognition of existing entities, as in the case of the community of the Valcamonica. More often—and it is worth insisting on this—it was the *signori* of Milan themselves who promoted the

new aggregations and the associated separations from urban centres: as in the case of the community of Valtellina, or of the valleys near Bergamo.⁴³

The work of redefining political spaces was not limited to the mountainous areas, the furthest from the cities. In the foothills of the Alps all the great lakes—the primary route for men and trade along the north/south axis but also the east/west axis—were one after another brought into new institutional ambits, the captaincies of the lakes, whose jurisdiction extended to the places on the shore: so it was on the Lario—where only the city of Como and the centres on the Milanese shore were excluded from the new community of the lake—and on the Lago Maggiore, where the county of Angera, a tribute to the mythical origins of the Visconti, was formed within the new lake federation some decades later.

The federations were anything but marginal presences: even on the plain, in the largest of the civic *contadi*, that of Milan, the Visconti did not hesitate to intervene to form or recognize some extended, supralocal communities (those of the Seprio and of the Martesana).⁴⁴

These new territorial bodies were not alone, however, in undermining the urban-centred arrangements of the communal era. As heavy a blow came from the many enfeoffments of lands and townships made by the dynasty, especially after 1395, when the ducal investiture dispelled any doubt about the ability of the Visconti to grant rights of jurisdiction in fief. Originating now in the opportunity to control through vassalage the many still existing rural lordships, now in the will to compensate figures close to the dynasty, now in the possibility for the duke to extract economic profit (in the Sforza era the dukes put the revenues of many communities up for sale several times, promising buyers enfeoffment with the community itself), there were very many enfeoffments. The first to make them were Gian Galeazzo and then Filippo Maria, who induced the many lords of castles still present in the dominion—already hit by periodic confiscations and destructions of their castles—to accept, one after another, their subordination through the instrument of *feudo oblato*, by which the *dominus castri* made a gift to the duke of his own jurisdictions and then received them back in fief. Only a few lineages—such as the Rossi of Parma—were able to evade this. Over some decades detailed legislation was then issued, aimed at limiting the jurisdictional and fiscal prerogatives of the

43 Massimo Della Misericordia, *Diventire comunità. Comuni rurali, poteri locali, identità sociali e territoriali in Valtellina e nella montagna lombardo nel tardo Medioevo* (Milano 2006); Patrizia Mainoni, *Le radici della discordia*.

44 Federico Del Tredici, *Comunità, nobili e gentiluomini nel contado di Milano del Quattrocento* (Milano 2013).

feudataries, at turning them into subjects. These were important regulations, that give the sense of a true feudal policy, but their application was often contested and produced quite variable results, according to the balance of forces with the feudataries.⁴⁵ Some of the feudataries, moreover, profiting from the favour of the prince or a moment of political weakness, had been able to create great concentrations of power. As in the case of the Borromeo, bankers of Tuscan origin who had made their fortune under Filippo Maria and who had been able to create through fiefs a veritable state within a state, which in the second half of the fifteenth century encompassed much of the Lago Maggiore. Or the Rusca, established between Lugano and the Ceresio.

Participants in the political dialectic with the duke were not only the territorial bodies of the dominion, but also some social bodies, beginning with the factions on which historians have concentrated their attention recently. No longer seen as disfunctional, as a prime cause of disorder—according to categories widely employed by later medieval states themselves—the *partes* have instead been seen as being of considerable importance in the processes of state-building. Factions have been recognized as having a *de facto* public valency, that made them an instrument in the organization of society: whether in the cities, where seats in councils were generally distributed according to membership of factions, or in the *contado*, where it was not rare to find territorialized factions, that is, communities that were entirely Guelf and others that were entirely Ghibelline, communities, therefore, that delegated to the faction the task of negotiating with the state, agreeing the tax burdens, and so on.⁴⁶ Far from being just an instrument for managing political conflict, therefore, factions primarily had the task of organizing political representation, alongside—and sometimes in place of—forms based on division by social order. Tolerated now tacitly, now explicitly by the state, factions became the target of ducal initiatives when they brought together or transmitted opposition to Visconti and Sforza policy: hence periodic decrees against whoever dared just to use the names Guelf and Ghibelline, and hence also occasional interventions at local level to put an end to the organization “*per Partes*”.⁴⁷

45 Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale*; Federica Cengarle, *Immagine di poter e prassi di governo. La politica feudale di Filippo Maria Visconti* (Roma 2006).

46 For two particularly interesting studies, see: Massimo Della Misericordia, “Dividersi per governarsi: fazioni, famiglie aristocratiche e comuni in Valtellina in età viscontea (1335–1447)”, *Società e Storia*, XXII, 1999, pp. 715–766; Marco Gentile, *Fazioni al governo. Politica e società a Parma nel Quattrocento* (Roma 2009).

47 Marco Gentile, “Factions and parties: problems and perspectives”, in Andrea Gamberini, Isabella Lazzarini (eds.), *The Italian Renaissance State* (Cambridge 2012), pp. 304–322.

Confronted by such a fragmented political picture, historians have gradually realized the impossibility of fitting the state of the early Renaissance into the model of the early modern state, understood in the Burckhardtian sense as a monopolistic concentration of power in the hands of the prince. Not because there was not a determined effort on the part of the state to control and subordinate the many social and territorial bodies, but because the growth of the regulatory capacity of the state came through pacts and agreements with them, not through their absorption or elimination (which happened only in small measure): right to the end of the *ancien régime* they kept their own customs and their own jurisdictional spaces.

The efforts of the Visconti and Sforza were, then, twofold. On the one hand the reduction of those spaces, through an ever more incisive intervention, in particular in the spheres of finance and jurisdiction. Tending in this direction were measures such as the arrogation to the *signore* of all the revenues of the territorial bodies, the increasingly frequent requests for new or extraordinary taxes, the affirmation of signorial *arbitrium*, that permitted derogation from local regulations, the introduction of a new graduation in the sources of law with signorial decrees at the top, prevailing over civic statutes and over the *ius commune*, the construction of urban fortresses in subject cities, to intimidate the inhabitants, and so on.⁴⁸ All measures that could be actuated through the expansion of the signorial bureaucratic apparatus: whether that operating at court (which has already been described), or that which operated in the civic districts and was typically constituted in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries of the triad of *podestà* (with judicial and executive functions), captain (with military functions) and referendary (with financial functions), to which in the time of Filippo Maria was sometimes added the commissioner (representing the duke and not bound by the statutes).

On the other hand, besides measures and provisions intended to increase the authority of the *signore*, his capacity for action and raising taxes—to which subjects sometimes reacted with veritable revolts, such as those in the Lombard mountains in the 1370s, the *contado* of Parma in 1385 or that of Piacenza in 1462—the Visconti and Sforza conducted a battle to affirm their

48 Jane Black, *Absolutism in Renaissance Milan. Plenitude of Power under the Visconti and the Sforza 1329–1535* (Oxford 2009); Claudia Storti Storch, *Scritti sugli statuti Lombardi* (Milano 2007). On urban fortresses: Maria Nadia Covini, “Cittadelle, recinti fortificati, piazze munite: la fortificazione nelle città nel dominio visconteo, XIV secolo”, in Francesco Panero, Giuliano Pinto (eds.), *Castelli e fortezze nelle città e nei centri minori italiani (secoli XIII–XV)* (Cherasco 2009), pp. 47–65.

own political culture. In such a society so fragmented into social and territorial bodies, each of them often animated by its own idea of the relations of obedience and subordination, the dukes not only did not have the monopoly of force, but not even that of legitimacy. To the question “what makes subordination to a superior power legitimate?”, the many political actors gave answers that were not only diverse, but were often rooted in different hinterlands of political culture. Between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, for example, in some sectors of the *contado* there were still diffused customary norms that exalted personal bonds and which appeared incompatible with the principles, generally derived from Roman law (such as, for example, that of territoriality), on which the duke based his authority.⁴⁹ No less problematic was the encounter between the authoritarian and monarchic political culture of the prince, which was expressed in rapidity of action, and that of the urban and rural communities, developed from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the banner of collective decisions, elaborated through highly formalized (and consequently slow) procedures, in which unanimity was central, understood as a mirror of the equality between the components of the community.⁵⁰

In the light of these elements it will now be clear that the object of political communication between the duke and the territorial bodies of the state was not only the division of jurisdictional prerogatives or access to resources (material, fiscal, et cetera), but the very rules, continually redefined, on which were based political cohabitation. From this point of view the refoundation of the duchy by Francesco Sforza in 1447–1450 on the basis of explicit pacts (as communities yielded themselves to the new lord, pacts were signed, to which were attributed constitutional value)⁵¹ provided a solid institutional platform, but did not eliminate the tendency on the part of territorial bodies and of the prince himself to renegotiate the terms of this relationship and to debate the rules of the political game.

49 Andrea Gamberini, “Conciliating the Incompatible. The Lords of Milan’s Chancery Activity in the Mirror of Some Charters (Late 14th Century)”, in Mark Mersiowsky, Christina Antenhofer (eds.), *Negotiating Rules: Platforms and Exchanges. The Role of the Medieval Chanceries*, forthcoming.

50 Massimo Della Misericordia, “Principat, communauté et individu au bas Moyen Âge. Cultures politiques dans l’État de Milan”, in *Médiévales*, 57, 2009, pp. 93–111.

51 Giorgio Chittolini, *Città, comunità, feudi*, pp. 39ff.

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- , *"Per non privarci de nostre raxone, li siamo stati desobidienti". Patto, giustizia e resistenza nella cultura politica delle comunità alpine nello stato di Milano (XV secolo)*, in C. Nubola, Würigler (eds.) *Suppliche e "gravamina". Politica, amministrazione, giustizia in Europa (secoli XIV–XVIII)* (Bologna, 2002).
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Spanish Milan, 1535–1706

Stefano D'Amico

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the State of Milan suffered a period of turmoil and instability as France and Spain continued to challenge one another for imperial domination over the area. Occupied in 1500 by the army of Louis XII, who deposed Ludovico Sforza, the state was ruled by the French until 1512, again from 1515 to 1521, and briefly between 1524 and 1525.¹ After the defeat of Francis I at the battle of Pavia, Francesco II Sforza resumed his role as the Duke of Milan, although he remained under the supervision of the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Spain, Charles V. In November 1535, after the death of the Sforza, who left no legitimate heirs, the state, as an imperial fief, returned juridically under the rule of Charles V. With the creation of the Spanish branch of the Habsburg dynasty, Charles established a new system of control and feudal legitimation that depended not on Vienna, but rather on Madrid as his center of power.² The control over the State of Milan had enormous strategic implications, especially from a Spanish perspective. Already in 1529, Margaret of Austria, aunt of the emperor, had defined Milan as “the key to Italy, by which the kingdom can be preserved.”³ A few years later, an anonymous observer explained the complex geo-political function of the State of Milan, describing it as “a ring that connects the states of his majesty, especially Germany with Italy, and Spain with Germany (...) also Germany with Naples and Sicily that is of great importance.”⁴

1 On the period of French rule see Stefano Meschini, *La Francia nel Ducato di Milano. La politica di Luigi XII, 1499–1512* (Milan, 2006); Letizia Arcangeli, ed., *Milano e Luigi XII. Ricerche sul primo dominio francese in Lombardia, 1499–1512* (Milan, 2002).

2 Cinzia Cremonini, “Considerazioni sulla feudalità imperiale italiana nell’età di Carlo V,” in *L’Italia di Carlo V. Guerra, religione e politica nel primo Cinquecento*, eds. Francesco Cantù, Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Rome, 2001), p. 260.

3 Federico Chabod, *Storia di Milano nell’epoca di Carlo V* (Turin, 1961), p. 5.

4 Mario Rizzo, “Porte, chiavi e bastioni. Milano, la geopolitica italiana e la strategia asburgica nella seconda metà del XVI secolo,” in *Mediterraneo in armi (secc. XV–XVIII)*, ed. Rossella Cancila (Palermo, 2006), pp. 470–1.

Difficult Beginnings

The early stages of the Italian wars had substantially reduced the territories of the State of Milan: the lands of Bellinzona and Lugano were lost to the Swiss, Valtellina and Chiavenna to the Grisons, and the wealthy towns of Parma and Piacenza to the Papacy.⁵ The new state, organized in nine provinces centered around the main towns (Milan, Como, Cremona, Pavia, Lodi, Novara, Vigevano, Tortona and Alessandria), comprised an approximate total of 16,000 square kilometers and a population of 1,200,000 people.⁶ Weakened by decades of warfare, famines and the terrible plague of 1525–6, Lombardy could be seen as yet another burden on the already strained finances of Charles v. The Spanish ambassador in Genoa, Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, reporting on the condition of the state in 1537, wrote that the needs of Milan were so great that “seven Perus would not be enough to provide for them.”⁷ Indeed, the idea of disposing of Milan was entertained several times during the initial years of Charles’ rule: in 1543, Duke Ottavio Farnese offered two million golden *scudi* for possession of the State of Milan, and the year after, in 1544, there was some discussion to cede Milan to Charles, Duke of Orleans, through his marriage with either Charles’ daughter, Mary, or his niece, Anne.⁸ Maintaining and sustaining Lombardy and Flanders far exceeded the available resources of Charles v, and at court a lively debate raged on the costs and benefits of each area. Within this discussion, Milan found valiant supporters within the emperor’s closest circle. The Duke of Alba considered Milan to be one of the major crossroads of imperial communications in Europe and in the Mediterranean as well as the gateway to Germany and Flanders.⁹ The preservation of imperial rule over Milan would allow for the more facile creation of a diplomatic network with other Italian states as well as for a more formidable defense of the peninsula. Control over the State of Milan helped to assure control of Italy and was essential for the role of Spain in Mediterranean politics. Italy represented a barrier against the Turks and stood as a logistical font of support for the battles in northern Africa. After 1546, the discussions over dispensing with Milan faded away and, as a sign of the growing significance of the State within the grander

5 Chabod, *Lo Stato di Milano*, p. 10.

6 Domenico Sella, *Crisis and Continuity. The Economy of Spanish Lombardy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), p. 3; Luigi Faccini, *La Lombardia fra '600 e '700* (Milan, 1988), p. 29.

7 Federico Chabod, *Lo Stato e la vita religiosa a Milano nell'epoca di Carlo v* (Turin, 1971), p. 53.

8 Chabod, *Storia di Milano*, p. 71.

9 Rizzo, “Porte, chiavi e bastioni,” p. 472.

imperial designs, Spain designated a new office, a Lombard regent, who would serve as special advisor for matters concerning the State and as a member of the itinerant court of Charles.¹⁰

Yet, the current wars and the defense of the State continued to present grave concerns for the Spanish government. Military expenses accounted for more than 80 percent of the state budget in 1542.¹¹ Lombardy, however, quickly recovered from the devastation of the first three decades of the century and offered an increasingly larger contribution to the war effort. The Spanish government began a massive sale of fiscal revenues that would become the cornerstone of a growing consolidated debt. The revenues alienated between 1542 and 1573, assured a higher return than any other form of investment (from 5 to 12 percent), and as they were easily traded, were purchased by a scores of people, from bankers to craftsmen and widows.¹²

Madrid introduced the *mensuale* in 1536, a new emergency monthly tax of 20,000 *scudi*, designed to help finance the expanding war expenses. Charles V ordered the assemblage of the *estimo*, a census on all movable and unmovable assets, in 1543 (completed in 1600), and ultimately converted the *mensuale* into a permanent annual tax of 300,000 *scudi*. In an attempt to determine the amount and distribution of wealth within the state, and the consequent allocation of the tax, central and local authorities, towns and rural communities, merchants and guilds, engaged in a long and harsh struggle. The *estimo* would eventually lead to a more equitable distribution of the burden between the cities and the countryside as well as the establishment of the *Congregazione dello Stato*, an administrative body in which urban and rural interests were equally represented.¹³

10 Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariño, "The State of Milan and the Spanish Monarchy," in *Spain in Italy. Politics, Society and Religion, 1500–1700*, eds. Thomas Dandeleit, John Marino (Leiden, 2006), pp. 108–9.

11 Mario Rizzo, "Non solo Guerra. Risorse e organizzazione della strategia asburgica in Lombardia durante la seconda metà del Cinquecento," in *Guerra y sociedad en la monarquía hispánica: política, estrategia y cultura en la Europa Moderna, 1500–1700*, eds. Enrique García Hernán, Davide Maffi (Murcia, 2003), p. 225.

12 Giuseppe De Luca, "Government Debt and Financial Markets: Exploring Pro-Cycle Effects in Northern Italy during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Government Debts and Financial Markets in Europe*, ed. Fausto Piola Caselli (London, 2008), pp. 48–56.

13 On the *estimo* see Giovanni Vigo, *Fisco e Società nella Lombardia del Cinquecento* (Bologna, 1979).

Juridical and Institutional Continuity

Considering the importance of the state for the strategic interests of the Spanish crown, Charles' decision in 1546 to invest his son, future heir to the throne, with the title of duke of Milan, was not surprising. The news of the transfer of the administration of the State became public in 1550, but the actual consecration occurred only between December 1554 and January 1555 in London, on the occasion of Philip's wedding to Mary Tudor. This transition of power finally put an end to all doubts and concerns about the destiny of the State of Milan—Milan would be officially subjected to Spanish rule. During the same months, a special council, the *Junta de Italia*, core of the future *Consejo de Italia* (officially established in 1558), brought together the Italian territories and Madrid with the appointment of two regents, one native and one Spanish, representing each province of the empire.¹⁴

While the first half of the century had been disrupted by war and economic crisis, the reign of Philip II (1556–1598), especially after the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis ended the war with France in 1559, was characterized by peace and relative prosperity. In this period, the administration of the State and the relations between Milan and Madrid acquired more precise and stable features that, with only minor variations, would define them until the arrival of the Austrians in 1706.¹⁵

Spanish rule did not introduce radical reform in the state administration and relied on the legacy of the ducal tradition: a federal rather than absolute structure with broad autonomy granted to intermediate bodies, and a central role of the urban centers, and in particular the capital city and its elites. Milan served as the major city of the State and the seat of a double set of offices: the civic offices that oversaw the city's administration; and the royal offices that

14 On the transition of power to Charles V to Philip II and the formation of the *Consejo de Italia* see Chabod, *Storia di Milano*, pp. 117–47; Maria-Jose Rodríguez-Salgado, *The Changing Face of Empire. Charles V, Philip II and Habsburg Authority, 1551–1559* (Cambridge, Eng., 1988); Manuel Rivero, *Felipe II y el Gobierno de Italia* (Madrid, 1998); Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariano, *Milán y el legado de Felipe II. Gobernadores y corte provincial en la Lombardia de los Austrias* (Madrid, 2001); Id., “Una forma di consiglio unito di Napoli et Milano. La corte de Felipe II en Londres y el gobierno de Lombardia,” in *Espacios de poder: cortes, ciudades y villas* (s. XVI–XVIII) ed. Jesús Bravo (Madrid, 2002).

15 On the administrative organization of the city and the State see Alessandro Visconti, *La pubblica amministrazione nello Stato Milanese durante il predominio straniero (1541–1796): saggio di storia del diritto amministrativo* (Rome, 1913); Mario Bendiscioli, “Politica, amministrazione e religione nell'età dei Borromei,” in *Storia di Milano*, 10 (Milan, 1957), pp. 69–118.

administered the entire State, theoretically mediating between its different urban and rural components, and Madrid.

The frequent changes of regime that characterized the first decades of the sixteenth century greatly stimulated the growth of institutions controlled by the urban patriciate, which could both represent and replace the ruler in the periods of transition and assured the continuity of the State. Although very brief, French rule reorganized the distribution of power between a political and military envoy who acted in the best interests of the absent monarch, the Lieutenant General, and a body composed of Milanese patricians and five foreign *togati* (men of law) who served the interests of the local elites, the Senate.¹⁶ The Spanish rulers preserved this type of organization, replacing the Lieutenant General with a governor as representative of the king and captain general of the army, and reserving participation in the senate only for Milanese patricians.

The New Constitutions (*Constitutiones Domini Mediolanensis*), a collection of laws and legal practices introduced by Charles V in 1541 during his stay in Milan, identified precise limitations to the new central power. The New Constitutions represented the best of the Milanese juridical tradition of the Visconti-Sforza period. They emphasized the continuity between the old and the new governments, retaining the system of checks and balances always present in the state.¹⁷ In line with a guiding principle of the Spanish imperial administration, within the state the king acted as the successor of the Sforza and therefore as the Milanese duke. As described by a Spanish political writer of the seventeenth century, the different provinces of the empire were to “be ruled and governed as if the king who holds them all together were king only of each one of them,” preserving their traditions and autonomies.¹⁸

The prominent role of the urban elites, and in particular the Milanese patriciate whose members controlled all the major offices, who served the king and at the same time assured the continuity of local traditions and autonomies, proved to be the unifying element between the State and local administrations. As John Elliott effectively argued for the case of Catalonia, also in Lombardy, “the ruling class tended to assume a double role. On the one hand, it helped

16 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvario, “The State of Milan,” p. 99.

17 Ugo Petronio, “Consistenza e realtà politico-amministrativa dello Stato di Milano in età spagnola,” in *Dallo Stato di Milano alla Lombardia contemporanea*, ed. Silvia Pizzetti (Milan, 1980), p. 55.

18 Cited in Domenico Sella, “Spanish Rule in Milan in the Sixteenth Century: Old and New Perspectives,” in *Italian Renaissance Studies in Arizona*, eds. Jean R. Brink, Pier Raimondo Baldini, (River Forest, IL, 1989), p. 204.

the crown to maintain the established order against possible upheaval from below; on the other, it sought to preserve, and, if possible, to extend, its rights and privileges against real or alleged encroachments by the crown; a process which it tended to identify with the preservation of the country at large from arbitrary royal government."¹⁹

Although on many occasions, the monarchy tried to promote the representatives of the lesser towns of the state, Milanese patricians controlled a vast majority of the offices. In fact, the 249 families represented in the city council, which served as the headquarters of the patriciate during the period of Spanish rule, not only monopolized the posts within the city government but also occupied most of the royal positions.²⁰

Governor and Senators: The State Administration

The first governors who served under Charles V, especially Ferrante Gonzaga (1546–54), maintained a certain degree of autonomy and sometimes pursued personal agendas by relying on extended patronage networks, and were able to nominate officials and select their own advisors.²¹ Their administrations often neglected the demands of both the Madrid circles and Milanese elites, exacerbating existing tensions. Under Philip II, however, the power of the governors became much more limited and they were only allowed control of the intermediate offices, while the king decided all major nominations.²² After 1557, the governors who, with only two exceptions, were always Spanish, served for periods rarely over three years and were ordered by the king to avoid conflict with the local elites in favor of compromise and collaboration.

The *Castellano*, commander of the Milanese garrison, another Spaniard who exerted great influence in both the local and Spanish networks, enjoyed an especially close relationship with the governor in both military and political matters.

19 John H. Elliott, *Spain and its World, 1500–1700* (New Haven, CT, 1990), p. 79.

20 Franco Arese, "Elenchi dei magistrati patrizi di Milano dal 1535 al 1796. I Sessanta perpetui decurioni," *Archivio Storico Lombardo* 73 (1957), 149–99.

21 Cesare Mozzarelli, "Patrizi e governatori nello Stato di Milano a mezzo il Cinquecento. Il caso di Ferrante Gonzaga," *Cheiron* 9 (1992), 124–5.

22 Gianvittorio Signorotto, "Equilibri politici, istituzioni e rapporti di potere in età spagnola," in *Storia della Lombardia. Dalle origini al Seicento*, eds. Livio Antonielli, Giorgio Chittolini (Rome-Bari, 2003), pp. 229–30.

The *Gran Cancelliere* (Lord High Chancellor) assisted the governor by validating his orders to guarantee consistency with the law, and helped to supervise the activities of the other main councils of the State. The *Gran Cancelliere* who, with two exceptions in the sixteenth century, was always a Spaniard, responded directly to Madrid, and served as an instrument of royal control over the provincial government. His role was particularly important during times of war as he would then replace the governor, who was temporarily away handling military affairs, in the daily administration of the State.²³

The *Gran Cancelliere* also acted as the chair of the *Consiglio Segreto* (Secret Council), a body formed by many of the major state officials and military commanders that advised the governor on the most important political and military matters. According to the orders of Tomar in 1581, the council served as a sort of court of appeal for fiscal cases and had to be consulted by the governor on all the major issues such as war and new laws and edicts.²⁴ In 1622, the *Consiglio* acquired a more precise form, setting the number of its membership to thirteen, including the *Gran Cancelliere*, the presidents of the Senate and the two *Magistrati*, the *Castellano* of Milan, the two generals of the cavalry, the general of the artillery, the general commissary of the army, and four members *sine officio* chosen by the king, usually to respond to the specific needs of the moment or as a reward for their service to the crown. The role and the relevance of the *Consiglio Segreto* varied according to the political-military situation, the prestige of the individual members, and the personality of the governor. In the case of the untimely passing of the governor, the *Consiglio Segreto* would temporarily replace him, although its authority was limited to the most urgent matters and did not include the appointment of new officials and the granting of pardons.

The *Gran Cancelliere* also supervised the two major courts that oversaw the financial administration of the State. After a failed attempt by Charles V to consolidate them into one single body, in 1563, Philip II decreed a return to the ducal tradition, with a distinction between the *Magistrato Ordinario* and the *Magistrato Straordinario*.

The *Magistrato Ordinario*, whose president was always an Italian after 1617, prepared and supervised the state budget, controlled markets and currencies, and administered duties and taxes. The *Veedor General* exercised control

23 Gianvittorio Signorotto, *Milano spagnola. Guerra, istituzioni, uomini di governo, 1635–60* (Milan, 1996), pp. 93–98; Álvarez-Ossorio Alvarino, “The State of Milan,” p. 111.

24 On the *Consiglio Segreto* see Cinzia Cremonini, “Il consiglio segreto tra interim e prassi quotidiana (1622–1706),” in *La Lombardia spagnola. Nuovi indirizzi di ricerca*, eds. Elena Brambilla, Giovanni Muto (Milan, 1997), pp. 225–61.

over the finances of the army, but the *Magistrato Ordinario* managed military expenses such as supplies, ammunitions and fortifications.

The *Magistrato Straordinario*, always presided by a Spaniard, supervised the administration of the king's possessions, including the sale of fiefs, controlled grain trade, the application of fines and confiscations. He also controlled the prevention and repression of contraband, and the administration of the Navigli. The orders of the *Magistrati* were received and carried out by the *Tesoreria Generale* (General Treasury) that oversaw the allocation of public money.

Immediately below the two *Magistrati* in the official hierarchy came the *Capitano di Giustizia*, always a Lombard subject, appointed by the monarch every two years. The *Capitano*, besides being responsible for the control of brigandage throughout the State, had civil jurisdiction on cases concerning senators and high state officials and acted as executor on all the sentences of the Senate.

Finally, another important body of the central government, especially during the frequent epidemics, was the *Magistrato di Sanità* (Court of Health), that was put in charge of all matters of public health and hygiene throughout the State and had jurisdiction also over beggars and vagrants.

Originating from the Sforza secret council, the Senate remained the representative of local power and legal tradition, and defender of the state's autonomies and privileges.²⁵

Together with the *Congregazione dello Stato* that represented the lesser towns and rural communities, the Senate was to the State of Milan what the *Cortes* were to Aragon, and the Parliaments to the southern Italian provinces.²⁶ Throughout the Spanish period, the Senate embodied the organism that regulated the relationship between the patriciate and the monarchy. In the New Constitutions, the composition and prerogatives of the Senate were precisely defined: the supreme judicial body included a president and fourteen senators, patricians over thirty years old, three of whom (after 1570) had to be Spanish. The king directly appointed the president, but in the selection of a new senator the monarch had to choose from a list of three names submitted by the senators in office. The Order of Worms in 1545 endorsed the judicial and gubernatorial powers of the Senate, sanctioning its autonomy from the

25 On the Senate see Ugo Petronio, *Il Senato di Milano. Istituzioni giuridiche ed esercizio del potere nel Ducato di Milano da Carlo V a Giuseppe II* (Milan, 1972).

26 Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "Corte y provincia en la monarquía católica: la corte de Madrid y el Estado de Milán, 1660–1700," in *La Lombardia spagnola*, p. 337.

governor, the *Gran Cancelliere* and the *Consiglio Segreto*.²⁷ Besides being the symbol of the unity and tradition of the State, the Senate also functioned as a supreme court of justice, with jurisdiction on feudal matters, and appeals in all civil and criminal cases. It wielded broad discretionary power in the interpretation and application of the law and managed jurisdictional relations with the church and diplomatic relations with the neighboring states. It could also issue decrees regulating the administration of the city and the provinces in matters like grain and food supplies, policing foreigners and Jews, controlling heresy and witchcraft. More importantly, the Senate controlled and revised the decisions of the state's financial courts and had the power to suspend royal legislation that violated the fundamental laws of the state. The Senate often clashed with the governor, as they both attempted to assert their power, with the senate proclaiming its supremacy as the defender of local traditions and autonomies.

Towns and Rural Communities: The Local Administration

At the provincial level, the new Spanish government did not heavily interfere with the privileges enjoyed by the administration and institutions of the different territories of the state. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the State of Milan still "preserved many features of a confederation or rather of a union of states under the same sovereign."²⁸ Every town was characterized by specific customs and traditions, often dating back to the times of the medieval communes, with a certain degree of autonomy from the central government on matters such economic policies, public order and allocation and collection of taxes.²⁹ The nine provincial capitals also maintained strict control over their *contadi* and their magistrates had actual jurisdiction over the rural communities. Towns controlled roads networks, food supplies, prices and manufacturing activities throughout their provinces. They also enjoyed substantial fiscal privileges: citizens were mainly subject to indirect taxation, while rural households paid a series of direct taxes. In addition, lands owned by citizens were

27 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "The State of Milan," p. 107.

28 Salvatore Pugliese, *Condizioni economiche e finanziarie della Lombardia nella prima metà del secolo XVIII* (Turin, 1924), p. 18.

29 On this process see Giorgio Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado. Secoli XIV e XV* (Turin, 1979).

taxed at a lower rate than those owned by rural residents, and in most cases towns were exempted from billeting soldiers.³⁰

The *terre separate* (separated lands), such Bobbio, enjoyed much more extensive autonomies and were basically exempted from any fiscal burden and from the jurisdiction of both the provincial capital and the central government. Several communities that were imperial fiefs responded directly to the Holy Roman Emperor and did not abide by the laws of the State. They represented jurisdictional islands where the feudal lord was basically the absolute ruler since the bonds with Vienna were generally very loose. They also represented havens for outlaws and smugglers who often used them as headquarters for their operations.³¹

In every provincial capital, the general council was the main administrative body and was always controlled by the local elites. In Milan, the *Consiglio dei Sessanta Decurioni*, which was reduced from 900 to 150 members by Francis I of France in 1516, and further reduced to sixty members in 1518, would remain unchanged throughout the Spanish period. The members of the council of Cremona numbered 150 and, from the end of the sixteenth century, included mainly noble landowners. In Como, the membership was only at 75 until 1583 and then fell even further to 60.³²

Stronghold of the patriciates, these councils provided most of the civic officials, selecting also the members of a smaller, more efficient, body that acted as the supreme organism of civic government. In Milan this body was the *Tribunale di Provvisione*, composed by twelve members. Ten of these members were selected by the governor from a list of eighteen *decurioni* (three per city gate) presented by the city council. Two of these officials, elected by the college of jurists from amongst its members, joined them to form a twelve-man tribunal. A *Vicario*, a member of the college of jurists chosen by the governor, presided over the tribunal. The *Vicario di Provvisione*, besides representing the head of the civic administration, also served as a judge in all fiscal and police matters concerning the city. The *Tribunale di Provvisione*, whose jurisdiction

30 Visconti, *La pubblica amministrazione*, pp. 132–8; Domenico Sella, “Sotto il dominio della Spagna,” in Carlo Capra, Domenico Sella, *Il Ducato di Milano dal 1535 al 1796* (Turin, 1984), pp. 23–7.

31 Sella, “Sotto il dominio della Spagna,” pp. 27–8.

32 Franco Arese, “Nobiltà e patriziato nello Stato di Milano,” in Pizzetti, *Dallo Stato di Milano*, p. 72; Giovanni Vigo, *Uno stato nell'impero. La difficile transizione al moderno nella Milano di età spagnola* (Milan, 1994).

extended also to the Milanese *contado*, administered the budget, nominated all city employees, and controlled provisions.³³

In the provincial towns an official of the *Magistrato Ordinario* (*Referendario*) ensured that the community honored its fiscal obligations. A podestà chaired the general council and acted as civil and criminal judge. A *Castellano* or *Governatore della Piazza*, presided over the local garrisons and often, especially in times of war, exerted considerable political authority, serving as representative of the governor of the state beyond his duties as a military officer.³⁴

While the countryside was under the authority of the towns, the rural communities could still elect their representatives. A council of all heads of households usually selected deputies who elected a consul, with judicial authority, and a chancellor who had the delicate task to supervise the fiscal contribution of the community.

In the 1560s, new representative bodies for the rural communities were formed to counterbalance the power of the towns in the disputes on the new *estimo* of lands, eventually published in 1568. The *Congregazione del Ducato* (contado of Milan) was probably established in 1561, the *congregazioni* of Lodi and Cremona were already active in 1562, and that of Pavia was in operation in 1565. In the same years the *Congregazione Generale dei Contadi*, where all rural representatives (*sindaci*) met to organize a common strategy in opposition to the urban demands, was functioning.³⁵ These associations represented the first seeds of autonomy for the rural communities. The rights of these communities were confirmed by the activity of the *Congregazione dello Stato*, an institution that had developed spontaneously as a response to the *estimo*, and which included nine orators representing the towns and nine *sindaci* representing the *contadi*. At its head was the *vicario di provvisione*.³⁶ Originally, the *Congregazione* had the specific responsibility of defending the interests of the different groups before the prefects who prepared the new *estimo*. The influential vote of the *vicario* could often determine the final decision and find in favor of the urban and especially Milanese side. While the urban compo-

33 On the *Tribunale* and the other bodies of civic administration see Arese, "Nobiltà e patriziato," pp. 72–8; Bendiscioli, "Politica, amministrazione," pp. 96–102.

34 Paola Anselmi, *'Conservare lo stato.' Politica di difesa e pratica di governo nella Lombardia spagnola fra XVI e XVII secolo* (Milan, 2008), pp. 101–31.

35 Vigo, *Uno stato*, pp. 50–1.

36 Cinzia Cremonini, "The *Congregazione dello Stato* between Renewed Local Fervor and Unitary Tension," in *Growing in the Shadow of an Empire. How Spanish Colonialism Affected Economic Development in Europe and in the World, 16th–18th Centuries*, eds. Giuseppe De Luca, Gaetano Sabatini (Milano, 2012) pp. 361–76.

nent remained always very powerful within the *Congregazione*, the institution did introduce some limitations to the absolute power of the towns over their *contadi*. The rural representatives managed to defend their rights and even gained some significant victories. Since 1597, for example, the towns were required to reimburse the communities that hosted troops for expenses and damages caused by the soldiers.³⁷ In the course of the seventeenth century the *Congregazione dello Stato* was also gradually invested with the administration of military finance, acquiring more political relevance and instituting a closer relationship with Madrid.

Towns and rural communities could also establish direct contact with the crown. After the creation of the *Consejo de Italia*, representatives of the local elites had the option to bypass the governor and take their grievances directly to the regents in Madrid. Milanese agents permanently resided in Madrid and maintained constant relations with the *Consejo de Italia*. Ambassadors, who could more effectively represent the demands of the state as a whole or of one of its components, went directly to Madrid to address conflicts with the governor or to deliver specific requests to the king. The Spanish capital soon became a hub of agents and residents representing not only the Milanese elites but also the specific interests of the lesser towns and the rural communities of the State.³⁸

From Gate to Italy to Heart of the Monarchy

Philip II was well aware of the importance of the Lombard province and in the first years of his rule, especially after making peace with France in 1559, attempted to reorganize the State of Milan, strengthening central control from Madrid. The failed attempt to establish the Spanish Inquisition in 1563 was definitely a move in that direction, as was the decision to always have a defined number of Spaniards in all the supreme courts, three in the Senate, and a full one third of the officials in the two *Magistrati*. The appointment of a Spaniard as *Gran Cancelliere* became the norm, and the king scheduled periodical visitations to check on the administration of the Italian provinces.³⁹ These inspections were designed not only to help synchronize the general interest of the

37 Sella, "Sotto il dominio," p. 58.

38 Bendiscioli, "Politica, amministrazione," pp. 100–1.

39 Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "Españoles y Lombardos en el gobierno del estado de Milán en tiempos de Federico Borromeo," *Studia Borromaica* 17 (2003), 297–8; Id., *Milán y el legado de Felipe II*, p. 36. On the inquisition see Massimo Carlo Giannini, "Fra

monarchy with the local freedoms, but also to examine the activity of local officials and eliminate any abuses. Though the king never administered serious punishments or introduced relevant changes, these visitations provided a means of direct intervention from Madrid.⁴⁰

Philip II may have originally fostered serious intentions to centralize the administration of the State of Milan; however, the dramatic changes of the political scenario convinced him otherwise. In fact, after the start of the revolt of the Netherlands in 1567, Milan proved itself as an essential crossroads in the Spanish path to Flanders.⁴¹ Spanish troops sailed from the Iberian ports to Genoa, and from there they moved to Milan before crossing the Alps through the Swiss Cantons, crossing the German Habsburg lands, and finally arriving in the Flemish territories.

In 1572, Governor Requesens described Milan as “the garrison and frontier” of all royal holdings in Italy.⁴² Lombardy became a major center of collection and redistribution of Spanish troops that would spend anywhere from a few days to several months in the State, where soldiers were trained before proceeding to the battlefields. Milan acquired the function of military ventricle, pumping troops, money and supplies across the Alps. Until the end of the Spanish period, Milan remained one of the European areas with the highest concentration of soldiers.⁴³

Since 1559, the core of the defensive system was the *tercio* of Lombardy that boasted 3,000 infantrymen, mainly stationed in the southwestern part of the State. In 1589, the *tercio* was described as “the father of the other regiments and the seminary of the best soldiers seen in Europe in our time.”⁴⁴ The local army could also rely on 1,000 horsemen, around 1,300 soldiers stationed in castles and fortifications, and the governor’s guard.⁴⁵ Since the start of the Dutch revolt and basically until the end of the seventeenth century, the number of

autonomia politica e ortodossia religiosa: il tentativo d'introdurre l'inquisizione 'al modo di Spagna' nello Stato di Milano,” *Società e Storia* 24 (2001).

40 Geltrude Macrì, “Visitae generales e sistemi di controllo regio nel sistema imperiale spagnolo,” *Mediterranea* 5 (2008), 385–400; Mario Rizzo, “Arti auroseriche e potere amministrativo a Milano nelle ‘Visitae generales del Estado de Milan’ tra la fine del Cinquecento e l’inizio del Seicento,” *Studi Storici Luigi Simeoni* 41 (1991), 245–74.

41 Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567–1659*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Eng., 2004), pp. 42–69.

42 Rizzo, “Porte, chiavi e bastioni,” p. 475.

43 Luis A. Ribot García, “Las provincias italianas y las defensa de la monarquía,” in *Nel sistema imperiale: l'Italia spagnola*, ed. Aurelio Musi (Naples, 1994), p. 70.

44 Cited in Parker, *The Army of Flanders*, p. 188.

45 Rizzo, “Non solo Guerra,” p. 230.

soldiers in the state rose to about 20,000 and reached almost 40,000 during the military campaigns of the 1640s. Venice, which was recognized as the main Italian military power at the time, could count on less than 3,000 troops.⁴⁶

Faced with changes in the international arena, Philip II and his successors abandoned all projects of centralization in order to avoid any possible tension with their Milanese subjects. The preservation of “peace and tranquility” became the primary goal in Lombardy. Because of its strategic role, the State of Milan enjoyed a privileged status and broader autonomy than either the Netherlands or Naples.⁴⁷

In the seventeenth century, political observers argued that the State of Milan had to be governed carefully, without exploiting or mistreating the population.⁴⁸ In 1602, when the governor, the Count of Fuentes, advised Philip III to select only Spaniards and Italians from other provinces as senators, the *Consejo de Italia* vetoed his proposal, and instead recommended the promotion of subjects from lesser towns in the State to counteract the power of the Milanese patriciate.

The absolute priorities for Milan, in the general interest of the empire, included guaranteeing the internal stability of the State, garnering the support of the native population, and preventing possible revolts. Milan would symbolize the benefits and advantages of being under the rule of the Spanish government to the other Italian states. Indeed, besides becoming the center of military command in Spanish Italy, Milan also served as one of the major centers of the complex Spanish diplomatic networks in the peninsula. Spanish supremacy over Italy could be maintained by navigating a complex, delicate, and constant diplomatic web that required intelligence, dynastic relations and the generous concession of honors, pensions and titles to rulers and families

46 Cesare Mozzarelli, “Nella Milano dei re cattolici. Considerazioni su uomini, cultura e istituzioni tra Cinque e Seicento,” in *Lombardia borromaica, Lombardia spagnola, 1554–1659*, eds. Paolo Pissavino, Gianvittorio Signorotto (Rome, 1995), p. 425; Mario Rizzo, “‘Rivoluzione dei consumi,’ ‘state building’ e ‘rivoluzione militare’. La domanda e l’offerta di servizi strategici nella Lombardia spagnola, 1535–1659,” in *Tra vecchi e nuovi equilibri. Domanda e offerta di servizi in Italia in età moderna e contemporanea*, eds. Iginia Lopane, Ezio Ritrovato (Bari, 2007), p. 454.

47 Sella, “Spanish Rule in Milan,” p. 204.

48 Angelantonio Spagnoletti, “Italiani in Spagna, spagnoli in Italia: movimenti di popolazione e influenze socio-culturali e politiche,” in *Spagna e Italia in età moderna: storiografie a confronto*, eds. Francisco Chacón, Maria Antonietta Visceglia, Giovanni Murgia, Gianfranco Tore (Rome, 2009), p. 20.

sympathetic to the cause.⁴⁹ In 1602, Damiano Bernardini, Lucca's ambassador to Milan, wrote that the Milanese government had become the natural arbiter of Italian affairs as Venice, Savoy, Tuscany, Parma, Mantua and Urbino all sent representatives who met every day at court in Milan.⁵⁰

War Emergency

With the first war of Mantuan succession (1613–18), the beginning of the Thirty Years' War in 1618, and the reopening of the conflict with the Netherlands after the twelve-year truce in 1621, the strategic and military importance of Milan increased exponentially in the seventeenth century. In 1628, at the start of the second war of Mantuan succession and the descent of the French army into northern Italy, the State of Milan actually became the center of military operations. After the Treaty of Cherasco in 1631, Milan enjoyed only a few years of peace. By 1635 war with France had recommenced. This time military operations would endure almost twenty-five years and bring the enemy deep into Lombard territory, spreading misery and destruction throughout the State. Only in 1659 when the peace of the Pyrenees was signed with France would the hostilities end and bring about a temporary peace.⁵¹

The reigniting of the conflict with France further reinforced the role of Milan within the empire. In 1626, a Spanish text described the state of Milan as "the heart and the center of the monarchy, at least of all the kingdoms and states contained in this hemisphere."⁵² Madrid had to rely even more on the allegiance of its Lombard subjects and the Spanish government recognized that social order and stability within the state were paramount to their position as a European empire. Indeed, the decision to exempt the State from royal visitations after 1636 indubitably signaled the new privileged relationship between Milan and Madrid.⁵³

After the loss of Breisach in 1638 that marked the interruption of the Flanders road, and the beginning of the Catalan revolt two years later that reversed the movement of troops from Italy to Spain, Milan ceased to be the main center of

49 Rizzo, "Non solo Guerra," 245. On the Spanish diplomatic activity in Italy see Michael J. Levin, *Agents of Empire. Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Ithaca, 2005).

50 Giulia Calvi, "I Toscani e la Milano barocca," in *"Millain the great". Milano nelle brume del Seicento*, ed. Aldo De Maddalena (Milan, 1989), p. 170.

51 On the military-diplomatic events of this period see Sella, "Sotto il dominio," pp. 9–16.

52 Sella, "Sotto il dominio," p. 185.

53 Signorotto, *Milano Spagnola*, p. 303.

military operations.⁵⁴ Madrid was now clearly more concerned with the internal revolts on Spanish soil as well as a potential French invasion. By 1643, the *Consejo de Estado* decreed that Naples and Milan were now fully responsible for the defense of the Italian territories.⁵⁵ Without any external financial help, the State had to call on Lombard taxpayers to make up for the fiscal shortfall.

In exchange for loyalty and financial support, the Spanish crown offered honors, pensions and titles on an even larger scale than ever before and allowed the Lombard subjects more control over their provincial government.

Because of the war emergency, Lombard representatives occupied a majority of the offices, including, during the periods of transition, those of governor and *Gran Cancelliere*. Individuals were able to use local networks and financial resources to establish closer relationships with the royal court. A family's status, especially the chance to occupy the most influential political posts, was now predicated on its relationship with the crown and not on its position within the patriciate. Even more than in the previous century socio-economic and administrative-judicial hierarchies tended to coincide. *Gran Cancelliere* Quijada declared in 1646 that the royal officials were "regularly (...) the wealthiest and most powerful in the State."⁵⁶

While the natives of the State maintained, and in some cases, increased their roles in the local government, the Spanish monarchy tried, not always successfully, to replace Milanese citizens with representatives of the other components of the State. Considering the fact that the war was directly affecting the Lombard territories and the Spanish government relied heavily on the financial contributions and billeting of soldiers of the surrounding rural villages and the lesser towns, local notables were in the position of being able to best moderate, negotiate, and mediate between their communities and Madrid.⁵⁷

The great merchants joined the families of the urban patriciates and supported the financial efforts of the state during the war by investing part of their

54 Claudio Donati, "Ordinamenti militari e guerre nella Lombardia spagnola tra metà Cinquecento e fine Seicento," in *L'Italia delle cento città. Dalla dominazione spagnola all'unità nazionale*, eds. Maria Luisa Cicalese, Aurelio Musi (Milan, 2005), p. 142.

55 Davide Maffi, "Il potere delle armi. La monarchia spagnola e i suoi eserciti (1635–1700): una rivisitazione del mito della decadenza," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 118 (2006), 405–6.

56 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "Corte y provincia," pp. 335–6.

57 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "Españoles y Lombardos," p. 323.

capital into the public debt. In this way, they both profited greatly from the high yields and received recognition and favors from the Spanish court.⁵⁸

Many of these families crowned their ascent with the purchase of prestigious estates and titles.⁵⁹ In fact, while the idea of a refeudalization of Lombardy under Spanish rule has been called into question, there is no doubt that the sale of fiefs became increasingly common in the seventeenth century.⁶⁰ The number of fiefs, around 1,200 at the beginning of the sixteenth century, substantially increased. While only twenty-seven fiefs with attached titles were sold under the reign of Philip II (1556–1598) and the same number under Philip III (1598–1621), four times as many (107) were sold under Philip IV (1621–1665) and eighty-five under Charles II (1665–1700).⁶¹ A fief of fifty hearths was required for the title of count and a fief of one hundred for the title of marquis. In 1647, those titles could be purchased for 3,000 and 4,000 *ducati* respectively.⁶² Following a pattern already established by the Visconti and the Sforza, the Spanish government used the sale of fiefs to reward its loyal subjects and created a network of trustworthy and reliable vassals who controlled the countryside. The main objective of Madrid however was to increase its revenues, and for this reason only the eldest son could inherit the fief, making the devolution of the fief to the king because of the lack of direct heirs much more likely.⁶³

Another popular venue of social promotion was a career in the army. This route was often considered more accessible as it did not necessitate extensive connections with the patriciate or the governor. While in the seventeenth century, the local elites of the other Italian states seemed less eager to join the military, in Lombardy many aristocratic or simply wealthy families chose this option as their method of social and political ascent.⁶⁴ After 1640, the Lombard

58 Giuseppe De Luca, *Commercio del denaro e crescita economica a Milano tra Cinque e Seicento* (Milan, 1996), p. 207; Giovanna Tonelli, *Affari e lussuosa sobrietà. Traffici e stili di vita dei negozianti milanesi nel secolo XVII secolo, 1600–1659* (Milan, 2012), pp. 127–30.

59 Stefano D'Amico, *Spanish Milan. A City within the Empire, 1535–1706* (New York, 2012), p. 143.

60 On the problem of refeudalization see Sella, *Crisis and Continuity*, pp. 148–73.

61 Claudio Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia. Secoli XIV–XVII* (Rome-Bari, 1988), p. 280.

62 Matteo Sacchi, “‘Alla ferrata solita della loggia dei mercanti.’ Il mercato dei feudi in Lombardia (1680–1700),” *Società e Storia* 27 (2004), 68.

63 Sella, “Sotto il dominio della Spagna,” p. 31.

64 Davide Maffi, “Potere, carriere e onore nell'esercito di Lombardia: 1630–1660,” in *La espada y la pluma. Il mondo militare nella Lombardia spagnola cinquecentesca*, eds. Giuseppe Mazzocchi, Mario Rizzo (Viareggio, 2000), pp. 195–245. On the declining interest for the military career among Italian aristocrats see Gregory Hanlon, *The Twilight of a Military Tradition. Italian Aristocrats and European Conflicts, 1560–1800* (New York, 1998).

nobles controlled most of the provincial army. The permission to hire and equip a *tercio* led to the title of *Maestro di Campo* as well as a possible political career in Milan and Madrid.⁶⁵

A New Oligarchy

During the difficult central decades of the seventeenth century, a bloc of Lombard families close to the Spanish crown positioned themselves at the vertex of the State's social and political hierarchies. The undisputed leader and organizer of this new oligarchy, and the main mediator between Madrid and the Lombard elites, was the most powerful of Milanese politicians: Bartolomeo Arese.⁶⁶

Bartolomeo was a member of a prestigious patrician family. His father Giulio had been president of the *Magistrato Ordinario* and the Senate. His wife, Lucrezia Omodei, was the daughter of Marquis Carlo and niece of Emilio Omodei, who was described in 1626 as "the wealthiest and most powerful Italian banker."⁶⁷ Bartolomeo was appointed *Capitano di Giustizia* in 1636, and questore of the *Magistrato Ordinario* just two years later. In 1641, he became senator, member of the *Consiglio Segreto* and president of the *Magistrato Ordinario*. This last office was particularly significant in the period of war emergency as the *Magistrato* controlled the State's budget and the military expenses, and became the most effective platform to gain higher honors in Spain.⁶⁸ Under Arese, the *Magistrato Ordinario* turned into the central body of the State's administration. Arese was nominated to the *Consejo de Italia* and became the privileged interlocutor of Madrid. Very quickly his power and prestige rivaled that of the governor, and, in 1660, Bartolomeo received the final consecration with his appointment to president of the Senate, an office he held until his death in 1674.

Arese succeeded in mobilizing all the available resources by establishing a solid alliance between the families of the Lombard feudal aristocracy, sectors of the urban patriciates, Spanish families with Lombard roots, and groups of

65 Rizzo, "Rivoluzione dei consumi," p. 457; Signorotto, *Milano Spagnola*, p. 179; Mozzarelli, "Nella Milano dei re cattolici," p. 428.

66 On Arese see Signorotto, *Milano Spagnola*, pp. 146–70.

67 De Luca, *Commercio del denaro*, p. 186.

68 Signorotto, *Milano Spagnola*, p. 123; Cremonini, "Il consiglio segreto," p. 252.

wealthy financiers, bond-holders and tax farmers.⁶⁹ This powerful bloc led by Arese carefully selected new individuals to integrate within their elite. The new members were required to swear an oath of allegiance to the Spanish crown as well as guarantee loans and make conspicuous investments to the public debt to support the king's needs. In return, the monarchy rewarded these individuals with offices and titles and entrusted them with even greater power within the State's administration.⁷⁰

Although the constitutional structure of the State was not modified, the king offered offices and even created new posts just to reward to his most loyal subjects. This type of award system was quite common within the *Consiglio Segreto* and the specific *juntas* and ministerial committees established during this period to assist the governor or replace him in dealing with urgent and delicate issues.⁷¹

The loyalty of the Milanese subjects and the financial support they provided allowed the Lombard army, still second in size within the monarchy, to successfully resist French pressure and report significant victories. The availability of money and the efficient logistical and tactical organization of the large numbers of troops prevented the risk of mutiny in the army.⁷²

The new oligarchy gained the absolute trust of the king and earned broader autonomy within the local administration because of its ability to preserve stability and order within the State.

The faction led by Arese presented itself as an alternative and more effective source of power to the traditional urban patriciate. It also painted itself as the new arbiter in the definition of the urban elites. The most prestigious Lombard families needed to establish blood or business relations with this leading group in order to play any role in the political arena. Under Arese, the number of Milanese patricians in the senate declined and the royal court and the governors promoted individuals from non-patrician Milanese families or from the lesser Lombard towns, favoring a political rise of the *Congregazione*

69 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "The State of Milan," p. 127. On the importance of mixed alliances between Spanish and Lombard families in the war period see also Id., "Españoles y Lombardos," p. 324.

70 Gianvittorio Signorotto, "A proposito della fedeltà di Milano alla Monarchia cattolica," in *Sardegna, Spagna e Mediterraneo; dai re cattolici al secolo d'oro*, eds. Bruno Anatra, Giovanni Murgia (Rome, 2004), pp. 278–87; Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "Corte y provincia," pp. 335–339.

71 Signorotto, *Milano Spagnola*, p. 84; Cremonini, "Il consiglio segreto," pp. 252–6.

72 Maffi, "Il potere delle armi," pp. 429–30.

dello Stato.⁷³ Especially after 1662, when the *Congregazione* became directly responsible for the payments for the billeting of the troops, it acquired a more prominent role, and its representatives, at least the urban ones, began to find more permanent residences in Milan so that they could attend the regular weekly meetings.⁷⁴

The Last Years: Venality and Decline

The end of the conflict with France in 1659 did not bring about any sudden or major changes to the new socio-political order. Although the crown and the State were relieved from the pressing financial needs of the previous period, military expenses remained high as, even during the reign of Charles II, Spain had constructed a strong defensive structure around the triangle of Brussels, Milan and Barcelona. At the turn of the century, the army of Lombardy, which numbered between 10,000 and 20,000 soldiers, was reputed as being the best organized and most efficiently equipped of all the Spanish armies.⁷⁵

To offset the growing expenses of Madrid, the sale of titles of nobility that had already been exploited during the war period reached a massive scale after 1673. At the end of the century, the State of Milan became the first province of the empire where the venality of offices affected the highest ranks, including posts in the Senate and on the major courts.⁷⁶

The usual mix of family origin, extended social networks, legal education, admission in the *Collegio dei Giureconsulti* (college of jurists), and civic service, that had been necessary to access the urban elites, was replaced with real auctions, where the only pre-requisite was the availability of large sums of cash.

In 1674, the death of Bartolomeo Arese sparked a crisis of succession and weakened his faction. His designated heir and grandson Carlo Borromeo Arese, married to Giovanna Maria Odescalchi, the elder niece of Pope Innocenzo XI, did not provide the same forceful leadership. Under this weakened control,

73 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "The State of Milan," p. 130; Id., "Corte y provincia," pp. 338–41.

74 Cremonini, "The *Congregazione dello Stato*," p. 369.

75 Maffi, "Il potere delle armi, pp. 418–34. See also Id., *La cittadella in armi. Esercito, società e finanza nella Lombardia di Carlo II, 1660–1700* (Milan, 2010); Christopher Storrs, "The Army of Lombardy and the Resilience of Spanish Power in Italy in the Reign of Carlos II (1665–1700) Part One," *War in History* 4 (1997), 371–97, and Part Two," *War in History* 5 (1998), 1–22; Ribot García, "Las provincias italianas."

76 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, "The State of Milan," 130.

some marginalized patrician and aristocratic families, such as the Trivulzio and Este, were able to reorganize.⁷⁷ Their rehabilitation efforts were aided by support received in Madrid by Juan Jose of Austria, natural son of Philip IV and leader of the opposition to the regency of Philip's widow, Mariana.⁷⁸ However, the political and military complications of the closing years of the century, especially after hostilities broke out during the war of Spanish succession in 1701, reconfirmed this new social order that was based on the widespread sale of titles and the prominence of the families more tightly connected to the crown.

By then, Madrid no longer represented the exclusive center of patronage. The decline of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty, the idea that the monarchy was not able to safeguard the interests of the elites along with the pressure of French and imperial demands, shifted loyalties towards other European courts. Already before the beginning of the war, a sector of the Milanese patriariate, and some of the old noble families like the Trivulzio, had sided with Vienna. After the designation of Philip V of Bourbon as the new king of Spain in 1700, the Lombard aristocracy also deferred to the French court, as Louis XIV influenced any decision made by his grandson. When Charles of Habsburg took Barcelona in 1705, also the Catalan city became an important point of reference.⁷⁹

Yet patrician interests were so deeply intertwined with the structures of the Spanish system that most members of the elites feared that the breaking of the union between Milan and Madrid could only bring negative consequences. Venetian resident Vendramino Bianchi wrote in 1700 that "The Milanese seem to be confused by the risk to switch under the rule, that they call tyranny, of a natural prince, and loose, in other words, the freedom they enjoy under the current rule".⁸⁰

A change of regime was in the air and soon materialized. After a resounding victory over the Franco-Spanish army in the battle of Turin, Eugenio of Savoy led the imperial troops into Milan on September 26, 1706. On April 16, 1707,

77 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvarino, "Corte y provincia," pp. 340–1.

78 On these last decades of Spanish rule see the fundamental work by Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvarino, *La república de las parentelas. El estado de Milán en la monarquía de Carlos II* (Mantova, 2002).

79 Cremonini, "Il 'Gran Teatro' della nobiltà," pp. 22–31; Spagnoletti, "Italiani in Spagna," p. 26.

80 Mozzarelli, "Patrizi e governatori," p. 133.

after the Spanish garrison had left the castle, a great celebration marked the final ceding of the State of Milan over to the Austrian empire.⁸¹

In the last years of war, especially given the lack of a clear center of power, the great families of the Milanese aristocracy had asserted their firm control over the urban elites. The Borromeo, Trivulzio, Archinto di Tainate, all established alternative courts in their own palaces and organized ceremonies and receptions that competed with those of the declining monarchy and distinguished them from the inflated new nobility.⁸² Indeed, the “Spanish” Borromeo and the “Austrian” Trivulzio, earlier ostracized by Madrid for their French sympathies, and now allied to one another after the marriage of Carlo Borromeo Arese’s sister Lucrezia to prince Antonio Gaetano Trivulzio, assumed a lead role in the transition of the state under the new ruler.⁸³

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81 Elisabeth Garms-Cornides, “Tra Spagna, Austria e impero. Il Ducato di Milano nella politica asburgica intorno al 1700,” *Archivio Storico Lombardo* 133 (2007), 274–276.

82 Cremonini, “Il ‘Gran Teatro,’” p. 22.

83 Signorotto, “A proposito della fedeltà di Milano,” p. 286.

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The Lombard Church in the Late Middle Ages

Giancarlo Andenna

A Divided Church: The Complexity of Relations with the Papacy between the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

The death of Ottone Visconti (1295) opened a period of difficulty in the relations between the metropolitan, who from 1277 was also the *signore* of the city of Milan, and suffragan bishops of the archdiocese. Ottone had known how to maintain equilibrium in the government of the metropolitan territory, without clashing with the strong ecclesiastical personalities operating in it, and restricting himself to controlling the situation of the Milanese Church, intervening only on the orders of the pope in dioceses in which problems of a religious nature arose.

The high point in the direction of the ecclesiastical province had been reached in September 1287, when in the palaeochristian basilica of Santa Tecla Archbishop Ottone had presided over a provincial council in which were present the suffragans of Vercelli, Brescia, Novara, Lodi, Turin, Cremona, Alba, Ventimiglia and Acqui, and representatives of the cathedral chapters of Bergamo, Tortona, Savona and Alessandria, sees which at that moment were vacant. The Council had begun badly, because there had immediately been a dispute between the bishop of Brescia, Berardo Maggi, and the bishop of Vercelli, Aimone of Challant, over who should sit on the right hand of the metropolitan. Such a right conferred on the prelate the office of presiding over the Council if the metropolitan see was vacant. According to the Milanese liturgical calendar known as Beroldo Vecchio, compiled at the end of the tenth century, the position to the right of the archbishop belonged to the bishop of Vercelli, the successor to Eusebius, a bishop active in the middle of the fourth century, while the bishop of Brescia occupied the position to the left. But in the course of the twelfth century the story, now known to be false, spread throughout Milan, that the Christian faith had been preached in Milan and in Brescia by Barnabas, the companion of Paul of Tarsus, and that he had consecrated Anatalone bishop of both cities. In Milan this story necessitated the rewriting in 1269 of the Beroldo Vecchio, with the insertion of an important miniature depicting the apostle Barnabas in the act of conferring the mitre on Anatalone, placed between the two cities of Milan and Brescia

which he had evangelized. This story upset the ritual order and the bishop of Brescia occupied the position to the right, while the bishop of Vercelli left the meeting.¹ During the Synod thirty legislative decrees were issued, which reconfirmed the validity of canonical norms fixed in previous provincial councils, in regulations of papal legates, pontifical decretals and in decrees against heretics, including those promulgated by Frederick II. Monks were to observe the Rule of St Benedict, and regular canons that of St Augustine; ample room was reserved in the decrees for the defence of ecclesiastical *libertates*, with the prohibition of usurpation of Church property. There were strict regulations against usurers and moneylenders, with a prohibition on receiving interest on loans to ecclesiastics and on asking for *res ecclesiae*, such as chalices, codices and precious liturgical objects, as security.²

In these years Ottone had also acted as a papal delegate in resolving the major questions of the political struggle between the suffragan Churches and the decision-making bodies of their respective Communes. For example, in 1282 he had received from Martin IV the charge of intervening in the question of the *libertas Ecclesiae* at Brescia. In that city the bishop, Berardo Maggi, had opposed the decisions of the Consiglio del Comune and the *podestà*, who had approved anti-ecclesiastical legislation preventing clerics from testifying against laymen or from appealing against the decision to prosecute them in lay courts. The pope had ordered the metropolitan to annul the decisions taken by the Council and Ottone had obeyed, going as far as the excommunication of recalcitrant officials. In the end an accord favourable to the Brescian Church was reached and the bishop, Berardo Maggi, in line with the archbishop, could remove the excommunication.³ Nicholas IV also turned to Visconti, in August 1291, after St. John of Acre in the Holy Land had fallen into Muslim hands, so that he would speed up the convocation of a new provincial council to establish how it might be possible to recover the city, and to impose an

1 E. Cattaneo, *Il culto di Sant'Anatalone nella Chiesa milanese e bresciana*, "Ambrosius", 34 (1958), pp. 247–252; P. Tomea, *Tradizione apostolica e coscienza cittadina a Milano nel Medioevo. La leggenda di San Barnaba* (Milano 1993), pp. 55–208.

2 Bernardino Corio, *L'Historia di Milano* (Padova 1646), pp. 289–290; and *Concilium Mediolanense in Causa Disciplinae Ecclesiasticae habitum anno Domini 1287*, in G.M. Mansi (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 24, (Reprint: Graz 1960), coll. 867–882; and A. Thompson, *Cities of God: the religion of the Italian communes, 1125–1325* (Pennsylvania State University, 2005), pp. 296–300.

3 G. Andenna, *L'episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo alla conquista veneta*, in *A servizio del Vangelo. Il cammino storico dell'evangelizzazione a Brescia, L'Età Antica e Medievale*, ed. G. Andenna (Brescia 2010), pp. 153–155.

extraordinary tax on the clergy for that end. Moreover, the pope asked the metropolitan to restore concord among the faithful, so as to obtain aid to accomplish the reconquest of this Palestinian territory.⁴ But the pope's request was in vain, as the Lombard cities were absorbed in their internal political problems. Nevertheless, the papacy and the Milanese metropolitan did not always fully collaborate, since Nicholas IV in two letters sent to five Milanese female religious houses, belonging to the order of St. Augustine, gave the nuns permission to use the liturgy of the Roman Church, as they had always done since their foundation. In this way, the pope freed them from the pressing request of the archbishop that they should adhere to the Ambrosian liturgy.⁵ Finally, Ottone wanted to found a school for clerics, to be associated with the Cathedral chapter, teaching theology, so as to give priests with the cure of souls a fitting cultural and religious education.

But after the death of the archbishop the situation of veiled control by the metropolitan over the actions of his colleagues, and of measured and prudent relations with the papal power, became unsustainable, not least because from that same year of 1295 the Roman Church was led by Pope Boniface VIII. The new pope intervened immediately after the death of Ottone and arrogated to himself the right to nominate the successor, stating that the political situation of the city, controlled by Matteo Visconti, nephew of the late archbishop, could not guarantee an impartial vote by the canons of the Chapter. The new bishop, directly chosen by the pope, was the archdeacon of Reims, Ruffino da Frisseto, or rather of Fucecchio (1295–1296), who died after a few months.⁶ His successor, the archbishop of Messina and apostolic administrator of Nola, Francesca da Parma, or rather Francesco Fontana, was also nominated by the pope, on 23 August 1296,⁷ who chose him from among his most trusted collaborators, in that a Veronese source affirms that he was the nephew of Cardinal Gerardo Bianchi da Parma, who died in 1302, a person close to Charles I and Charles II

4 G. Soldi Rondinini, *Chiesa milanese e signoria viscontea (1262–1402)*, in *Storia religiosa della Lombardia. Diocesi di Milano*, I, eds. A. Caprioli, A. Rimoldi, L. Vaccaro (Brescia 1990), pp. 291–293.

5 *Les registres de Nicolas IV (1288–1292): recueil des bulles de ce pape*, ed. E. Langlois, vol. II, (Paris 1893), n. 2416, 7 March 1290; n. 3654, 13 November 1290.

6 See the letter of nomination in *Les registres de Boniface VIII: recueil des bulles de ce pape*, eds. G. Digard, M. Faucon, A. Thomas and R. Fawtier (Paris 1884), n. 555, 31 October 1295, in which the reason for the direct intervention of the pope is specified: “volentes provide earum obviare dispendiis que dubitabantur verisimiliter proventura, si ecclesia ipsa tunc vacaret vel imposterum, presertim in tanto turbine ac discordia illarum partium, vacare contingeret”.

7 *Les registres de Boniface VIII*, I, ed. A. Thomas (Paris 1884), n. 1256.

of Anjou.⁸ He remained on the archiepiscopal throne of Milan for twelve years, and from some letters of Boniface VIII and Benedict XI we know that he favoured the Torriani clan, traditional allies of the papacy.⁹ In fact, in 1302 they drove Matteo Visconti, nephew of Archbishop Ottone and captain-general of Milan, out of the city. The political insecurity of these years, and the office of collector-general, for the whole archdiocese, of the tenth imposed on the clergy to finance the war waged by Boniface VIII against the Aragonese in Sicily, drove the bishop to abandon the city to take refuge in the archiepiscopal fortress of Angera, where he stayed, with some breaks, from 1304 until his death in February 1308. The office of collector allowed him to handle large quantities of money and to have close relations with the Florentine Bardi company. Meanwhile at Milan in 1307 Guido della Torre assumed the office of Captain of the People. The archbishop was certainly involved in these political operations, because in 1303 he had conferred a knighthood on Guglielmo Brusati, head of the Guelf party of Novara, who had finished his term as Captain of the People in Milan.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the clash between Boniface VIII and Philip IV (the Fair) over the problems of episcopal elections in France and then of the collection of the pontifical tenth rendered the financial activity of the archbishop insecure, and he had to argue with the old centres of power of the Visconti clergy and with the supporters of the Empire, linked to groups of the nobility of ancient allegiance to the Swabians. Moreover, his partisan behaviour exposed him to the vendetta of the Visconti. From his refuge in the fortress of Angera, Francesco da Parma was incapable, after the death of Boniface VIII, of controlling the powerful groups of the Torriani (previously led by the Patriarch of Aquileia, Raimondo della Torre, who had died in 1299), who had penetrated into Milan in 1302. The archbishop was not in a position to acquire political power over the city and territory of Milan, as his colleague Berardo Maggi had done at Brescia, and so limited himself to fulfilling his functions as collector.

8 *Annales Veronenses*, in *Antiche cronache veronesi*, ed. C. Cipolla (Venezia 1890), p. 449; see also the entry on Francesco da Parma in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 49 (Roma 1997), *ad vocem*; the letters of Boniface VIII addressed to him are in *Les registres de Boniface VIII*, I, ed. A. Thomas (Paris 1884), nos 795, 1217, 1256, 1283 ff., 1290, 1554, 1990; II, ed. G. Digard (Paris 1890), nos 2158, 2541, 1874, 3020, 3675; III, ed. G. Digard (Paris 1909), nos 4127, 4131; to which follow on those of Benedict XI, *Les registres de Benoît XI*, ed. C. Grandjean (Paris 1883–1905), nos 197, 237, 514; on Gerardo Bianchi, see P. Silanos, *Gerardo Bianchi da Parma (+ 1302): la biografia di un cardinale-legato duecentesco* (Roma 2010).

9 See, for example, letter 197 of Benedict XI, *Les registres de Benoît XI*, n. 197, in which there is an account of his condemnation at the instance of Boniface VIII, for his favouring the Torriani who despoiled the property of the *cimiliarca* of the Milanese Church, Matteo Visconti.

10 G. Soldi Rondinini, *Chiesa milanese e signoria viscontea*, pp. 298–299.

By contrast, in March 1298 the bishop of Brescia, in a public ceremony later turned into propaganda by frescoes in the hall of the Palazzo Comunale and on the bishop's tomb,¹¹ ordered the heads of the *pars guelfa* to allow the re-entry into the city of the Ghibelline groups, on condition that they would always be submissive to the power of the Church and would not breach the peace imposed by the bishop, who kept political power over the city and the diocesan territory in his hands until his death on 16 October 1308.¹² Furthermore, when Maggi died, his strength in the ecclesiastical sphere was such that the episcopal office was transmitted to his nephew Federico, a canon of the cathedral, elected bishop of the city by a commission voted for by all the diocesan clergy, at the end of 1308. Since at that moment Federico had yet to receive any ecclesiastical orders and probably had not yet reached the canonical age for election, he decided to go to the papal curia to receive the approval of Clement v. He obtained this at Toulouse, on 2 January 1309. To be clear, when the pope permitted the ratification of the election, renouncing the right to nominate the bishop, he knew he could entrust to the new Archbishop of Milan, Cassone, or rather Gastone, della Torre, the *inquisitio* into the qualities of the bishop elect and the right to consecrate him. But first Federico had to recover the ecclesiastical property removed from the episcopal palace by the *populus*, immediately after the death of Berardo, following the old tradition of the *ius spolii*. Federico was consecrated in 1309, and also sided with the Guelf faction, as the triumph of the Torriana *pars* and of the Guelfs, supported by the banking companies of Florence, had reached its apogee in Lombardy.

In fact, during 1308 the cathedral canons of Milan, wishing to renew their right to elect the archbishop, had voted for Gastone, the second son of Mosca della Torre (and hence a grandson of Napoleone who had been defeated at Desio), just as his relative Guido della Torre became *capitaneus talee partis Ecclesiae Lombardiae* with the task of restoring control of the Church and of his family over Milan and, with opportune alliances, over the territory of other

11 For these expressions of the communication of power, see G. Andenna, *La storia contemporanea in età comunale: l'esecrazione degli avversari e l'esaltazione della signoria nel linguaggio figurativo. L'esempio bresciano*, in *Il senso della storia nella cultura medievale italiana (1100–1350)*, Atti del XIV Convegno Internazionale di Studi del Centro Italiano di Studi di Storia ed Arte di Pistoia, Pistoia 14–17 May 1993, (Pistoia 1995), pp. 345–360; G. Archetti, *Berardo Maggi, vescovo e signore di Brescia. Studi sulle istituzioni ecclesiastiche e sociali della Lombardia orientale* (Brescia 1994); and G. Milani, *Prima del Buon Governo. Motivi politici e ideologia popolare nelle pitture del Broletto di Brescia*, in “Studi Medievali”, ser. 3, 49 (2008), pp. 19–86.

12 G. Andenna, *L'episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo alla conquista veneta*, pp. 165–174.

Lombard cities. Gastone's election did not produce the results hoped for, as the archbishop very soon clashed with Guido, who imprisoned him with his household, on the accusation of plotting with Galeazzo Visconti to overturn the Guelph government. Numerous papal letters and the intervention of representatives of the Lombard Guelphs persuaded Guido to release the archbishop, who, on his release, excommunicated his relative and placed the city under interdict.¹³ The descent into Italy of Henry VII, who arrived at Milan at the end of 1310, put an end to the dispute, and on Epiphany 1311 Gastone had the privilege of placing the iron crown on the sovereign's head in the basilica of Sant'Ambrogio.¹⁴ But later that year, the emperor radically changed the situation, attributing to Matteo Visconti the Imperial vicariate for Lombardy with the right to administer civil and criminal justice.¹⁵ A total defeat loomed for the Torriani and Gastone made first for the castle of Cassano and then for Bergamo, where he summoned the synod of the metropolitan province, which met between 5 and 9 July 1311, as if in preparation for the successive ecumenical council of Vienne. The bishops of the Milanese province, including Uguccone di Novara, Uberto Avogadro di Vercelli, Cipriano Alessandri di Bergamo, and the *cimilarca* of Milan, Matteo Visconti, assembled at Bergamo. They agreed thirty-four chapters, containing the norms for the regulation of the life of the clergy and the functioning of ecclesiastical society. All regular religious were to come under the pope, not the bishops; and the necessity for ecclesiastical courts, the prohibition on encroaching on the lands and property of the Church, and the prohibition on usurious loans, were all confirmed. Finally, those who forced their bishops to abandon their dioceses for political

13 See the letters of 21 October 1209 to Nicola Fontana di Parma, economic procurator of the archbishop, to whom the pope had given permission to borrow 1200 gold florins for the expenses of the archdiocese and to ask for a further loan of 500 florins, paid out by Florentine bankers, in order to act for the liberation of the bishop from his imprisonment by Guido della Torre. See also the letters to the bishops of Padua and Turin with the order to demand Guido should free him, and those to the Captain-general of Milan himself, and to all the suffragan bishops of the province, as well as the bishops of Como and Pavia, which were not then subject to Milan, in *Tables des Registres de Clément V publiés par les moines bénédictins*, établies par Y. Lanhers and C. Vogel, sous la direction de R. Fawtier et G. Mollat (Paris 1957), nn. 4759, 4832, 4833, 5126 (this last dated 28 December 1309).

14 For papal approval of the election of Henry VII and for the reception of the emperor in Italian cities, see *Tables des Registres de Clément V*, n. 6336, 1 September 1310.

15 The nomination of Matteo Visconti as Imperial vicar of 13 July 1311 is in MGH, *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum*, IV/1, 1298–1313 (Hannoverae et Lipsiae 1906), nn. 660–660a, pp. 628–631. For the events of Gastone's life, G. L. Fantoni, *Della Torre Cassone (Gastone)*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 37 (Roma 1989), *ad vocem*.

reasons were condemned.¹⁶ Then Gastone went to southern France, probably to Avignon, where he remained until after the death of Henry VII (1313) and of Clement V (1314).¹⁷ On his return to Pavia in 1314, he immediately pronounced a sentence of excommunication on Matteo Visconti and all the adherents of the Visconti party, guilty of having again sacked the episcopal palace, of having taken the *iura Ecclesiae*, that is to say the documents attesting the property-rights, lordships and jurisdiction of the archbishopric, and of having occupied the castles of Angera and Cassano. But the excommunication did not have the desired effect and the archbishop did not succeed in re-entering Milan, where his Church was administered by vicars-general. These were very difficult years for ecclesiastical revenues, as the properties were in the hands of enemies and religious bodies were burdened with continual fiscal impositions, despite the right of exemption they had always enjoyed. The sad reality persuaded Gastone to renounce the office and benefice of archbishop, accept instead the dignity of Patriarch of Aquileia, on 10 January 1317, and in this way transfer his relatives and all the *pars guelfa* of Lombardy to Venetian and Friulan territory. Gastone never arrived at Aquileia, however, as in May 1318 he hired a galley at Marseille to go to Naples to pay homage to King Robert of Anjou. On leaving Naples he headed for Friuli, but died at Florence in August of that year having fallen from his horse.¹⁸

The Milanese Ecclesiastical Province Ravaged by the Wars between the Papacy and the Visconti (1317–1339)

On 13 July 1317 Giovanni XXII named brother Aicardo da Camodeia, provincial minister of the Friars Minor of Lombardy, as the future archbishop of Milan, and then confirmed him in the position on 28 September. Referring to the decree of Boniface VIII, *reservatio ecclesiae mediolanensis*, of 1295, the pope meanwhile annulled the election of the *cimilarity* Matteo Visconti by

16 *Synodus provincialis Pergani habita a Castono sive Cassono Mediolani archiepiscopo anno MCCCXI*, ed C. Castiglioni, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 2nd edn, IX/3, (Bologna 1935), pp. I–XVI.

17 G. Soldi Rondinini, *Chiesa milanese e signoria viscontea*, pp. 300–301.

18 For the nomination as Patriarch of Aquileia, I refer to S. Riezler, *Vaticanische Akten zur deutschen Geschichte in der Zeit Kaisers Ludwig von Bayern* (Innsbruck 1891), p. 12, n. 22. For the other events until his death, Fantoni, *Della Torre Cassone (Gastone)*, *ad vocem*.

the canons of the cathedral.¹⁹ The Visconti interpreted the act as a challenge to them and prevented the new archbishop, a member of a Novarese family linked to the Torriani, from taking possession of his see.²⁰ They feared that the friar could implement the anti-Visconti papal policy in Lombardy. Giovanni Tabacco has shown how John XXII from 1316, the year of the nomination to Parma of the Dominican Simone Saltarelli, put into effect a series of measures to eliminate the Italian Ghibelline groups: he revoked the Imperial vicariate of Matteo Visconti, and sent Bernard Gui and Bertrand de la Tour to Milan, Lombardy and the Romagna, with the aim of freeing imprisoned Guefs, restoring exiles to cities and obtaining the restitution of their property. But this enterprise, intended to establish peace between the factions, failed, and the pope entrusted to the faithful bishops Guido of Asti and Leone of Como the task of intimating to the Visconti and the Ghibelline groups the conditions of peace, on pain of excommunication and interdict.²¹ Aicardo could count on suffragans faithful to the Roman Church, since to the two bishops named above were added Uguccone of Novara, Alberto Gonzaga of Ivrea, Uberto Avogadro of Vercelli, Simone Saltarelli of Parma, Percivalle Fieschi of Brescia, nominated on 1 October 1317, Tiberio della Torre of Tortona from 1317, Cipriano degli Alessandri of Bergamo, Guglielmo Isnardi of Alba and Federico Cibo of Savona. Yet Aicardo waited another couple of years before returning from Avignon to Lombardy, where the cities of Milan, Novara and Vercelli were under interdict. In fact, the pope gave him permission on 5 May 1319 to contract a loan of 2000 gold florins, to use for the needs of his Church, and which was to be paid back within two years. On 8 July, he was on the road to Lombardy,

19 J.H. Sbaralea, *Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum constitutiones, epistolas, ac diplomata continens tribus ordinibus Minorum* (Romae 1759–1804), v, p. 126, 13 July 1317: the letter of confirmation of 28 September is edited by J.A. Saxii, *Archiepiscoporum series Historico-Chronologica*, II (Mediolani 1755), pp. 781–784 and then by G. Giulini, *Memorie spettanti alla storia, al governo ed alla descrizione della città e della campagna di Milano* (Milano 1854–57), v, p. 78.

20 A. Cadili, *Governare dall' "esilio". Appunti su frate Aicardo da Camodeia arcivescovo di Milano (1317–1339)*, "Nuova Rivista Storica", 87 (2003), pp. 267–323, in particular pp. 287–289.

21 G. Tabacco, *Programmi di politica italiana in età avignonese*, in *Aspetti culturali della società italiana nel periodo del papato avignonese*, Atti del XIX Convegno del Centro di Studi sulla spiritualità medievale, Todi, 15–18 ottobre 1978, (Todi 1981), pp. 49–75; Cadili, *Governare dall' "esilio"*, pp. 288–289. The report of the two Dominicans is in Reizler, *Vaticanische Akten*, n. 50, pp. 22–39; the actions of Guido di Asti in A. Ratti, *Intorno all'anno della scomunica di Matteo Visconti*, in *Rendiconti del Regio Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere*, s. 2, 36 (1903), pp. 1050–1063.

as the pope allowed him to recite the breviary according to the Roman liturgical rite and not the Ambrosian one, to reside outside his diocese, which was under interdict, and to visit the monasteries of the metropolitan territory not under the control of the Visconti.²² From the summer of 1320 Aicardo followed the army of Cardinal Bertrand du Poujet, the papal legate in Italy, and for this the pope permitted him to exact 1000 gold florins from the Milanese cathedral canons and non-exempt clergy, with which he could maintain his representatives in Lombard cities taken from the Visconti by the cardinal. All took up residence with the archbishop in Asti.²³ In this city the two prelates worked to defeat the Visconti, co-ordinating the bishops loyal to the pope, so that on 4 November 1321 all subscribed in Asti an accusation against Matteo Visconti, guilty of having persecuted them and of sequestering the property of the bishops.²⁴ The pope's response was swift: on 16 December Aicardo was given the task of instituting proceedings for heresy against the Visconti clan. He was flanked by four preaching friars and two abbots from Milan, while the suffragan bishops were his coadjutors. The proceedings, whose acts are preserved in the Vatican Codex 3937,²⁵ lasted from 1322 to 1324, and the court moved from Asti several times, to stop at Valenza, Monza and Piacenza, in the train of the army of Cardinal Bertrand. The proceedings against Matteo ended on 14 March 1322, when at Valenza the archbishop, surrounded by the faithful bishops, proclaimed the sentence of excommunication. This was a victory without consequences, as some months later Matteo died, leaving his son Galeazzo the task of continuing the struggle against the legate and against Aicardo, who took up residence in the city of Piacenza conquered by the troops of Bertrando.

Notwithstanding his absence from Milan, the archbishop continued to control the religious life of the diocesan territories and bishops of his province; proof of this is the assent he gave on 24 May 1325 for the exchange of dioceses between Percivalle Fieschi of Brescia and Tiberio della Torre, bishop of Tortona. Tiberio moved to Bresica, and Percivalle to Tortona, a city nearer to

22 Jean XXII, *Lettres Communes, analysées d'après les Registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, ed. G. Mollat (Paris 1904), p. 129, nos 9376, 9707–9709.

23 Cadili, *Governare dall'“esilio”*, pp. 288–289. The report of the two Dominicans can be read in Riezler, *Vaticanische Akten*, n. 50, pp. 22–39; for the activity of Guido in Asti, see A. Ratti, *Intorno all'annodella scomunica di Matteo Visconti*, in *Rendiconti del Regio Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere*, s. 2, 36 (1903), pp. 1050–1063.

24 Jean XXII, *Lettres Communes*, n. 16209, 4 November 1321; Cadili, *Governare dall'“esilio”*, pp. 292–293.

25 For a description of the codex, see F. Bock, *Studien zum politischen Inquisitionsprozess Johannis XXII* (Rom 1935), p. 42.

the Ligurian dominions of his family.²⁶ The arrival in Italy in the spring of 1327 of Ludwig of Bavaria, called il Bavaro, who had assumed the title of King of the Romans, created some problems in the Visconti camp and also had repercussions on Aicardo, as from Avignon the pope opposed the action of the future emperor. Ludwig, having had himself crowned king of Italy at Milan by the bishop and *signore* of Arezzo, Guido Tarlati, decided to march on Rome, where in 1328 he was crowned by Sciarra Colonna, Captain of the Roman people. At Rome Ludwig deposed Pope John XXII and nominated in his stead the anti-pope Nicholas V, who in his turn declared Aicardo, as a rebel of the Empire and a public enemy, deposed from his function as Milanese metropolitan. To govern the Milanese Church, on 4 July 1327 the emperor attributed the function of *iudex ordinarius* to the youngest son of Matteo, Giovanni Visconti, who was to exercise jurisdiction and administer justice on all the ecclesiastics of the diocese, as the archbishop would have done if he had been present.²⁷ In this way the Visconti acquired a legitimate title to justify how they had been behaving for years towards the Ambrosian clergy under the lordship of the family. Giovanni did not succeed in maintaining the position, being imprisoned with his brothers by Ludwig, accused of treachery, but the document of nomination could be useful on other occasions. To replace him, the emperor chose Marsilius of Padua, who in January 1329 called himself "*iudex clericorum et administrator archiepiscopatus in temporalibus*", offices which he exercised *auctoritate regia*.²⁸ The position of Marsilius ended on 10 February of that year, when Giovanni Visconti, reconciled with Ludwig, received from Nicholas V the dignity of cardinal and function of legate, as well as the office of "*administrator archiepiscopatus in temporalibus et spiritualibus*", but not nomination to the archbishopric. In the territories controlled by the legate Bertrand, on the other hand, the legitimate archbishop Aicardo continued to administer spiritually from Piacenza the suffragan Churches that still recognized him.

26 Andenna, *L'episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo alla conquista veneta*, pp. 182–183; Jean XXII, *Lettres Communes*, nos 22429–22430, Avignon, 24 May 1325. For Della Torre, Bishop of Tortona from 1317, see N. Covini, *Della Torre Tiberio*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 37, (Roma 1989), *ad vocem*.

27 MGH, *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum*, VI/1, (Hannoverae 1914–1927), ed. I. Schwalm, n. 312, pp. 222–224, 4 July 1327.

28 Cadili, *Governare dall'“esilio”*, pp. 301–302. See also S. Dale, “*Contra damnationis filios*”: the Visconti in fourteenth-century papal diplomacy, *Journal of Medieval History*, 33 (2007), pp. 1–32, in particular pp. 5–6.

In the autumn of 1329 Azzone and Giovanni Visconti agreed with John XXII to abandon the camp of the schismatics, but such concord did not signify the recovery of his rights and revenues for Aicardo.²⁹ In fact in August 1330 in a letter to Giovanni, called canon ordinary of the cathedral, the pope reproved him for continuing to occupy the property of the archbishop and for presuming to enjoy the revenues from it. Moreover, Visconti continued to protect the clergy who had been schismatic and permitted the Franciscans, formerly linked to Ludwig, to oppose the return of their brothers who were faithful to the papacy.³⁰ For Giovanni, after reconciliation to the pope, it was impossible to prevent the metropolitan carrying out his legitimate functions, yet Visconti wanted to avoid losing the revenues of the Ambrosian see, inasmuch as he considered it natural to acquire the office that had belonged to his forefather Ottone. The Avignonese curia, however, thought of giving him the bishopric of Novara, made vacant by the death of Uguccone, as the only way to put Aicardo back on his legitimate seat. Formally, at least, Giovanni would have to recognize the power of his old antagonist, who from 1316 had been appointed to govern the metropolitan see.

On 31 July 1331, the letter appointing Giovanni to the diocese of Novara was written at Avignon. The same day, John XXII wrote to the two *signori* of Milan another missive setting out the grave difficulties that would have to be overcome, in that the see had been requested by the Novarese cathedral chapter for other ecclesiastics, of great culture and faithful to the Roman Church. Taking account of these considerations, the pope asked Giovanni to exercise his pastoral office with integrity in action and correct behaviour, so as to cancel, with virtuous actions, his past misdeeds and to remove from the doubtful the suspicion that he had only decided to enjoy the revenues of the diocese of Milan as well as those of the bishopric of Novara.³¹ In any case, the pope decided that the consecration should not be carried out by the metropolitan Aicardo. A year before John XXII had given permission for Azzone to marry Caterina of Savoy, despite the impediment of the fourth degree of consanguinity.³² Now the Visconti acted in full accord with the Avignonese Church and Giovanni took advantage of this to acquire political *signoria* over the city of Novara and

29 Jean XXII, *Lettres Communes*, n. 50739, 26 November 1329.

30 G. Biscaro, *Le relazioni dei Visconti di Milano con la Chiesa*, "Archivio Storico Lombardo", 46 (1919), p. 155, 4 August 1330; Cadili, *Governare dall'"esilio"*, p. 303.

31 F. Cognasso, *Storia di Novara* (Novara 1971²), pp. 333–335. The letter is in Jean XXII, *Lettres Communes*, n. 54382.

32 Jean XXII, *Lettres Communes*, n. 50755, 21 April 1330.

its territory as well, even granting new statutes for them.³³ He governed the diocese through vicars, on whom he imposed a series of duties of administration and of spiritual and economic government: the pastoral visits of 1337 to the parishes of the diocese of Novara, continued afterwards by his successor, brother Guglielmo da Cremona, are indeed well known.³⁴ It was no longer possible to stop Aicardo taking possession of the archiepiscopacy in Milan; therefore on 4 July 1339, according to the testimony of Galvano Fiamma, the prelate finally entered the city, staying with the canons at Sant'Ambrogio and not in the episcopal palace which was held by Giovanni. Forty days later (12 August), Aicardo died and the cathedral canons immediately elected Giovanni Visconti archbishop.³⁵ But Benedict XII in Avignon did not approve the election, for he did not trust the bishop of Novara, because of his record as a schismatic cardinal.

The Dominion of the Visconti over the Lombard Church in Agreement with the Papacy (1342–1354)

Only in May 1341 did the pope, at the urging of Visconti, who was still officially bishop of Novara, decide to annul the excommunications and revoke the sentences of interdict, which up until then had been only suspended and never cancelled.³⁶ But Giovanni Visconti continued to be bishop of Novara, even if administrative and spiritual control over the Milanese diocese was firmly in his hands. It was Clement VI who decreed his appointment as archbishop, transferring him to Milan with an apostolic letter of 17 July 1342. The letter, for all its rhetorical overtones, represented just approbation of what Giovanni had done in the administration of the Novarese diocese. The pope intervened to order the transfer, persuaded by the need to fill the Ambrosian throne, vacant for three years, with a strong political and religious personality. Having carefully weighed the qualities of the various candidates, looking for a pastor worthy of

33 G. Andenna, *Una legislazione per legittimare e mantenere una signoria politica*, in *Statuti di Novara del XIV secolo. Edizione critica*, eds. G. Cossandi, M.L. Mangini (Varese 2012), pp. 361–377.

34 G. Andenna, *Vescovi, clero e fedeli nel tardo medioevo (1250–1400)*, in *Diocesi di Novara*, eds. L. Vaccaro, D. Tuniz, Brescia 2007 (Storia religiosa della Lombardia. Complementi, 2), pp. 139–180, in particular p. 159.

35 Cadili, *Governare dall'“esilio”*, pp. 306–307.

36 G. Biscaro, *Le relazioni dei Visconti di Milano con la Chiesa. Azzone, Giovanni e Luchino—Benedetto XII*, “Archivio Storico Lombardo”, 47 (1920), pp. 193–271, in particular pp. 240–242.

such an office, he had looked particularly at the merits of the Novarese prelate, in consideration of the exemplary way in which he had governed his see, from an administrative perspective.³⁷ The pope, therefore, considered that the metropolitan must carry out administrative work, in the judicial and economic spheres; the spiritual aspect remained in the background in the government of the diocese, but by contrast was well to the fore, with the other two aspects, in the appointment of Guglielmo da Cremona to the episcopal dignity of Novara, also on 17 July 1342.³⁸ Exceptional religious personalities also presided over the diocese of Bresica in the 1340s: Lambertino dei Balduini da Ozzano (1344–1349), to whom is owed the installation of the Carmelites in that city and the transfer there of the Benedictines of Monte Orsino; then Bernardo Tricardo (1349–1358), coming from directing the diocese of Bergamo, where he had carried out pastoral visits. This latter prelate not only administered Brescia with great competence, but also knew how to oppose the tyrannical acts of Bernabò Visconti.³⁹ A detailed pastoral visit to the diocese of Ivrea was also made in 1346 by the vicars-general of Bishop Giacomo de Francisco, a Cistercian monk, and from the surviving records emerges specific attention to the religious life of the laity, who were asked for their opinion on the behaviour of the priests by the visitor.⁴⁰ It looks as though the accord between Giovanni Visconti and the papacy was substantially founded on the appointment of men who accepted the political power of the archbishop, but with complete fidelity to the papacy and its ecclesiastical norms. In fact, in the fourteenth century the prelates directly appointed by the pope were prepared to carry out their functions by training in the study of canon law and a long stay in the curia as officials able to resolve complex juridical matters. In other words, the bishop had become a faithful executant of directives emanating from the papal chancery. They possessed “knowledge of letters, elegance in their ways, providence in spiritual matters and circumspection in temporal ones, and every other gift of virtue”.

37 Cognasso, *Storia di Novara*, pp. 340–341; A. Cadili, *Giovanni Visconti arcivescovo di Milano, 1342–1354* (Milano 2007), pp. 100–112.

38 For the personality of Guglielmo da Cremona, at one time prior-general of the Eremiti di Sant'Agostino, G. Andenna, *Il vescovo Guglielmo da Cremona (OHSa). Inediti ordini di visita pastorale alla pieve di San Giulio d'Orta (1347)*, in *La ricerca a la passione come metodo. Omaggio a Romano Broggin*, “Verbanus”, 26 (2005), pp. 21–55.

39 G. Andenna, *L'episcopato di Brescia dagli ultimi anni del XII secolo sino alla conquista veneta*, pp. 192–195.

40 I. Vignono, *Visite pastorali in diocesi di Ivrea negli anni 1329 e 1346* (Roma 1980), p. 4; G. Andenna, *Episcopato e strutture diocesane nel Trecento. La cura delle anime nel XIV secolo: struttura e funzionamento*, in *Storia della Chiesa di Ivrea dalle origini al XV secolo*, ed. G. Cracco (Roma 1998), pp. 321–443.

Pope Benedict XII expressed himself thus in a letter of episcopal appointment.⁴¹ In short, they were to bring light to a society in which they were not known—indeed sometimes they had difficulty in integrating into the social contexts of their dioceses, among the local clergy with no cultural pretensions, who cut a poor figure in comparison to them, but who had a firm grip on the pastoral government of peasants and artisans. By contrast the prelates linked to the popes had plans to realize a system of local government modelled on that of the papal curia from which they came and which would transmit with absolute fidelity the directives of the pontiffs. Giovanni Visconti, therefore, assured the functioning of a Church respectful of political power, while adhering fully to papal legislation. For this reason, I would not speak of submission of the Church to the tyranny of the Visconti, but of a precise and deliberate accord between papacy and political *signoria*, guaranteed by the personality and financial riches of the archbishop of Milan, who in any case had plundered ecclesiastical property, whose revenues he continued to exploit to assure political consent for himself. Certainly, the *libertas* of the Church, intended as a privilege and as a claim to a clear separation from the temporal power, was now understood in a different sense, as polite collaboration between two forces that stood together and legitimated each other. On the other hand, in 1344 Clement VI had declared that all the reservations established by John XXII over appointments of ecclesiastical dignitaries and over the enjoyment of their respective benefices were to be considered suspended.⁴² Such a decision could be connected with the fact that in 1343 Giovanni had paid 50,000 gold florins to obtain from the pope pardon for his actions committed against the Roman Church. To pay, Visconti used bankers from Asti, such as the Malabayla *mercatores*, and from Milan.⁴³ Nevertheless, the relations between the pope and

41 I. Vignono, *Visite pastorali in diocesi di Ivrea negli anni 1329 e 1346* (Roma 1980), p. 4; G. Andenna, *Episcopato e strutture diocesane nel Trecento. La cura delle anime nel XIV secolo: struttura e funzionamento*, in *Storia della Chiesa di Ivrea dalle origini al XV secolo*, ed. G. Cracco (Roma 1998), pp. 321–443.

42 On these questions, consideration has to be given to what has been written by F. Somaini, *Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali dello stato visconteo-sforzesco*, in *Storia d'Italia*, directed by G. Galasso, *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: la Lombardia* (Torino 1998), pp. 681–786, in particolare 776–786; and by A. Gamberini, *Il principe e i vescovi. Un aspetto della politica ecclesiastica di Gian Galeazzo Visconti*, in “Archivio Storico Lombardo”, 223 (1997), pp. 39–115, now in *Idem, Lo Stato visconteo: linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Roma 2005), pp. 69–136. The letter of 13 February 1344 is in Clément VI, *Les lettres secrètes, patentes et curiales se rapportant aux pays autres que la France, 1342–1352*, eds. E. Deprez, G. Mollat (Paris, 1960–1961), n. 400.

43 Clément VI, *Les lettres secrètes (étranger)*, n. 275, 9 September 1343, for a payment of 10,000 florins; for the 50,000 florins, see letter n. 196 of 20 June 1343. The florins continued to

Giovanni Visconti were always characterized by ambiguity, as was made evident, because he betrayed his oath, in the question of the conquest of Bologna in 1350, and as was testified in a letter to Giovanni of 9 June 1349, in which the pope asked that “the deeds of the bishop should conform to his words”.⁴⁴ In the end, even the problem of Bologna was resolved with the attribution to Giovanni of a papal vicariate over the city and a payment of 12,000 gold florins for twelve years, as well as two payments of 50,000 florins for damages.⁴⁵

The Years of the Absence of the Archbishop and of the Breach with the Political World of the Visconti

This *entente cordiale* functioned once more immediately after the death of Giovanni, on 5 October 1354, since Innocent VI, writing to the three nephews of the archbishop, Matteo, Bernabò and Galeazzo, reminded them of the services their uncle had offered to the Church and expressed the hope that they would do the same. Consequently, the pope, at the solicitation of the three Visconti and the candidate who had been chosen by the cathedral chapter, decided in November to confirm Roberto Visconti as archbishop, asking them all to support the efforts of Cardinal Egidio di Albornoz.⁴⁶ Roberto, who had the task of crowning Charles IV of Bohemia King of Italy on 6 January 1355, surrounded himself in the government of the Church with officials from his family, and soon had to oppose the actions of the three nephews of Giovanni Visconti, Matteo, Galeazzo and Bernabò, who had divided up between them the territory their uncle had dominated. The major confrontation arose with the violent Bernabò, who intended to dispose of the ecclesiastical revenues as he pleased to favour men linked to him, so that the archbishop and the suffragans were humiliated on several occasions and many clergy were tortured

be paid as in letter 753 of 13 August 1345, and n. 1020 of 4 1344; n. 1213, 18 September 1346. On these problems, see also Dale, “*Contra damnationis filios*”, pp. 6–7, as well as pp. 17–18 on the Mayabaila, and Y. Renouard, *Les relations des Papes d'Avignon et des Compagnies commerciales et bancaires de 1316 à 1378* (Paris 1941), pp. 216–230.

44 Clément VI, *Les lettres secrètes (étranger)*, n. 4184, 9 June 1349, “ita quod actus tuos conformes verbis esse probemus et devotionem tuam dignis gratiarum actionibus prosequamur”.

45 Innocent VI, *Lettres secrètes et curiales*, ed. P. Gasnault-M. H. Laurent, I (Paris 1959), n. 32, 8 January 1353; and n. 300, 16 May 1353.

46 *Ibid.*, n. 1191, 9 November 1354: “Ecclesie denique Mediolanensi tunc vacanti de persona dilecti filii Roberti, electi Mediolanensis, meritorum consideratione suorum et intuitu dicti archiepiscopi atque vestro duximus providendum”. On the relations between Albornoz and the Visconti, see Dale, “*Contra damnationis filios*”, pp. 11–16.

and killed. Bernabò was excommunicated by Innocent VI and by Urban V, who, after the death of Roberto, which probably happened in the plague of 1361, appointed as his successor the Milanese Guglielmo Pusterla (1361–1370), who for years had been working in the curia with the title of patriarch of Constantinople. He ruled the Milanese Church from Avignon, through vicars, without ever taking direct possession of the diocese. So did his successor, Simone da Borsano (1371–1376), elected to the archiepiscopal see by Gregory XI. He too was a Lombard, a scholar and professor of canon law, a man of the curia and close collaborator of the pope, so that he never came to the archdiocese, for one reason, because from 1372 the pontiff joined a League operating against the dominion of the Visconti in northern Italy. The war lasted until 1375 and the entire metropolitan territory experienced a profound disassociation between the higher clergy of the dioceses and the local clergy, the latter controlled by emissaries of the Visconti, while the prelates, linked to the pope, were unable to act in defence of ecclesiastical *libertates*.⁴⁷ An identical situation of ambiguity was manifest in relation to economic circumstances: in the territory the clergy with cure of souls were vexed by fiscal impositions of the Visconti, needed to pay for war, while on the other hand the pope demanded that the proceeds from ecclesiastical benefices needed to sustain the prelates should be sent to Avignon. Almost all the bishops of the metropolitan territory found themselves living with this fundamental disassociation, and consequently resignations became ever more numerous. In December 1375, after many journeys across Europe as a papal legate, Simone obtained nomination as cardinal and so resigned as metropolitan. The situation was so complicated that for five years the archiepiscopal see remained vacant, even if the truce of 1375 with the papacy should have relieved the burdensome fiscal control over local churches exercised by the Visconti. Finally pope Urban VI, on the suggestion of the young Gian Galeazzo, son of Galeazzo II, decided in 1380, against the negative opinion of Bernabò, to give his assent to the election of Antonio di Saluzzo, a noble linked to the young joint *signore* of Milan. Having treacherously imprisoned his uncle Bernabò in 1385, Gian Galeazzo became sole *signore* of the Visconti possessions. The major problem now was that of choosing in which camp to operate, since in 1378, on the death of Gregory XI, the schism had opened with the dual election of Urban VI, the Roman pope, and Clement VII, the Avignonese pope.

47 Somaini, *Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali*, pp. 780–781.

The Metropolitan Province during the Dominion of Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1380–1402)

Gian Galeazzo's capacity to govern, including in ecclesiastical affairs, was soon manifested in the matter of the diocese of Piacenza (1381–1383). The bishop Corrado Giorgi having died in 1381, Visconti proposed to the chapter the election of the Cremonese Franciscan Guglielmo Centueri, reader in theology in the new *studium* of Pavia. But Urban VI decided on the appointment of Andrea Segazoni, a Milanese Augustinian, and Clement VII that of a third candidate. The *signore* of Milan then ordered the Piacentine canons not to accept the prelates sent by Rome or Avignon and the question ended with the capitulation of Urban VI, who moved the Augustinian to Brescia and accepted at Piacenza Centueri, later destined to govern the diocese of Pavia for years and to bless the foundation of the Certosa, in full accord with Gian Galeazzo.⁴⁸ Indeed, the *signore* of Milan never chose a pope, with the result that he gained advantages from both popes and freedom of action in the field of religion. In the situation of a weak papacy, divided between the obediences of Rome and Avignon, Gian Galeazzo imposed on the clergy in 1383 a rigid law: no one was to solicit or accept ecclesiastical benefices without special leave from Visconti, on pain of the loss of the benefice and the payment of a fine equal to its value. Moreover, with the imposition of the *matricula* on the canons of the cathedral of Milan in 1377, he prevented the office of canon becoming the appanage of ecclesiastics from outside the city, sent by the popes, because only those belonging to a defined number of citizen families became canons. In this way the political control over the Church became capillary, such that all the Lombard bishops and all the major ecclesiastical offices were decided on by the *signore*, who was now engaged on the realization of great religious buildings, such as the Certosa of Pavia and the Duomo of Milan, begun in 1386, and on supporting the great complex of the church and hospital of Sant'Antonio di Vienne.⁴⁹ Gian Galeazzo controlled the archbishop of Milan, Antonio da Saluzzo, to such a degree in these years, that he was able to demolish not only

48 *I vescovi dell'Italia settentrionale nel basso medioevo. Cronotassi per le diocesi di Cremona, Pavia e Tortona nei secoli XIV e XV*, eds. P. Majocchi and M. Montanari, with an essay by P. Majocchi (Pavia 2002), pp. 66–73. On Gian Galeazzo's behaviour during the Great Schism, Dale, "Contra damnationis filios", pp. 25–31.

49 E. Filippini, *Questua e Carità. I canonici di Sant'Antonio di Vienne nella Lombardia medievale* (Novara 2013), pp. 51–60; for the Duomo see the deeds in A. Nava, *Memorie e documenti storici intorno all'origine, alle vicende ed ai riti del duomo di Milano* (Milano 1854), pp. 10–26.

the *hiemalis* cathedral of Santa Maria, but also all the houses of the archbishop and the canons, without any protest from the ecclesiastics. Indeed, the prelate was not paid for the damages suffered.⁵⁰ The process of the acquisition of power had been turned upside down: with Ottone, the ecclesiastical government had permitted the foundation of the political *signoria* and of the dynasty, with Giovanni, religious power and political power had been concentrated in his person, and now with Gian Galeazzo, political power could dispose at will of ecclesiastical power, directly indicating candidates, from chaplains to bishops, throughout the metropolitan province, or forbidding, using the weapon of the *placet*, the acquisition of benefices by ecclesiastics appointed by the pope.⁵¹ Nevertheless, for Gian Galeazzo the acquisition of his ducal title was due not only to his financial strength, but also to the diplomatic ability of a Franciscan theologian, Pietro Filargo, a “prelate of the prince”. He was an atypical ecclesiastic, in that he came from the island of Crete and had been educated at the universities of Padua, Oxford and Paris, before becoming a professor in the recently-founded university of Pavia, where he was appreciated by Visconti, who from 1386 promoted him bishop of Piacenza, then of Vicenza and finally of Novara in 1389. Sent to the Emperor Wenceslas in 1394, Filargo was able to secure for his “prince” in the following year the ducal title, transmissible to the eldest legitimate son and extended not only to Milan but to all the cities of the Visconti dominion, excluding Pavia which was elevated to a countship. On the death of Antonio da Saluzzo in 1402, the duke called on Filargo to govern the archdiocese of Milan. After the unexpected death of Gian Galeazzo, Filargo presided over the Regency Council to guarantee the ducal succession to his son Giovanni.⁵² Filargo was later raised to the cardinalcy and in 1409 was elected pope at Pisa by the French and Italian cardinals, but died suddenly in 1410.

50 Nava, *Memorie e documenti storici*, pp. 12, 40.

51 L. Prosdocimi, *Il diritto ecclesiastico dello stato di Milano dall'inizio della signoria viscontea al periodo tridentino (secoli XIII–XVI)* (Milano 1941), pp. 58–62, 107–114; but see also the entry by A. Gamberini, *Gian Galeazzo Visconti, duca di Milano*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 54, (Roma 2000), *ad vocem*.

52 A. Petrucci, *Alessandro V, antipapa*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 2, (Roma 1960), *ad vocem*; F. Somaini, *La Chiesa Novarese tra fine Trecento e metà Cinquecento*, in *Diocesi di Novara*, pp. 186–187.

The Lombard Church in the Fifteenth Century: Humanistic Culture and "Prelates of the Prince"

The crisis that afflicted the duchy during the minority of the duke's sons did not change the orientation of the political power towards the Church, and when Filippo Maria became duke, the pontiff Martin v, who had just been elected by the fathers of the Council of Constance, was not in a position to assert himself against the consolidated political strength of Visconti. Moreover, the best archbishops of the period, such as Bartolomeo Capra (1414–1433) and Francesco Pizzolpasso (1437–1443), and the bishops, such as Giovanni Capogallo, Pietro de Giorgi, and Bartolomeo Aicardi Visconti at Novara, as well as Gerardo Landriani at Como, or Venturino Marni at Cremona, were constantly absent from their dioceses, as they were involved in the activity of the councils of Constance and Basle, in the work of unification of the Church and in diplomatic activity for the benefit of the duke of Milan or of the popes. Capra was among the electors of Pope Martin v, who consecrated the Duomo on his way back from the council. In 1431 the archbishop, together with the powerful cardinal, Branda Castiglioni, crowned Sigismund of Luxemburg, whom Filippo Maria had invited to Milan, King of Italy in Sant'Ambrogio. By this time, all these prelates had a humanistic education and the conciliar meetings also served to bring these learned ecclesiastics together with many other exponents of the culture of the European Renaissance, among them Niccolò da Cusa, Francesco Zabarella, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Leonardo Bruni and Pier Candido Decembrio. Once more the Lombard Church, which in these years had lost the territories of Brescia and Bergamo to Venice, and that of Vercelli, ceded to the duke of Savoy, was governed by numerous "prelates of the prince", learned men, humanists, philologists and astute diplomats.⁵³ At Milan, after the death of Bartolomeo Capra and a long period of *sede vacante*, Eugenius IV sent Francesco Pizzolpasso (then busy in Basle), transferring him from Pavia. The new archbishop operated for years through his vicar Francesco della Croce, who in Basle was close to Branda Castiglioni, and who in Milan put into effect reforms of the canons and the monks, as in these years the ideas of the *devotio moderna* were penetrating Italy, through the religious reforms of Ludovico Barbo. In 1439 Eugenius IV's legate in Lombardy, Gerardo Landriani, prevented Pizzolpasso entering Milan, because Filippo Maria had adhered to

53 The concept of "prelates of the prince" has been used for a later period by F. Somaini, *La "stagione dei prelati del principe": appunti sulla politica ecclesiastica milanese nel decennio di Galeazzo Maria Sforza*, in *Milano nella storia dell'età moderna*, eds. C. Capra, C. Donati, (Milano 1997), pp. 7–64; here I am extending its use to the first half of the fifteenth century.

the pope elected by the Council of Basle, Felix v, Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy.⁵⁴ The archbishop lived in a friary outside Porta Ticinese until February 1443, when he died, leaving his rich library to the metropolitan chapter. Eugenius IV then appointed Enrico Rampini, bishop of Pavia, metropolitan, but the duke disliked him. Rampini had as his vicar Francesco della Croce, who consolidated relations between the religious and political administrations, strengthening the management of vacant benefices. Along the same lines the duke in 1446, while keeping Church and State separate, imposed on ecclesiastics a tax on their benefices, but wanted to exculpate himself and therefore called for a *consilium* from seven experts on canon law, including Della Croce, Antonio da Rho and the Franciscan Alberto da Sarteano. The commission condemned the interference of the prince in ecclesiastical matters, but approved his intervention in the case of bishoprics, to avoid the pope appointing persons who might undermine the security of the state. Filippo had the right to ask the bishops of his dominion to serve him with their counsel and in diplomatic missions for the advantage of the state. "The prince can licitly take care, supplicate and act so that the pope does not promote to major prelacies, such as the archbishopric and bishoprics, those *minus aptas nec convenientes pro securitate status sui*".⁵⁵ A year before the duke's death the experts in canon law, while condemning the fiscal impositions on the clergy, held it to be legitimate to seek to influence the pope, in the proper ways, to control the appointment of bishops in the dominion. In fact, this had happened for Novara when Martin v appointed Bartolomeo Aicardi Visconti bishop in 1429 when he was only twenty-seven; he was, as has been said, a "prelate of the prince" and was used as a ducal councilor, but also as an ambassador and conspirator. In fact in 1434 Bartolomeo, sent to Florence by the duke, together with his secretary Enea Silvio Piccolomini, organized, with the favour of Filippo Maria, a plot to kidnap Eugenius IV. Unmasked, he had to flee to Novara with Piccolomini, who soon afterwards was chosen as secretary of Cardinal Niccolò Albergati. Again as ambassador of the duke, in September 1438 Bartolomeo went to Germany to Albert of Habsburg, designated King of the Romans a few months before. Bartolomeo adhered with the duke to Pope Felix v, who appointed him cardinal, a dignity he renounced

54 For these problems, see M. Ferrari, *Il Quattrocento: dai Visconti agli Sforza*, in *Storia religiosa della Lombardia. Diocesi di Milano*, I, pp. 333–349, above all pp. 334–337; Somaini, *Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali*, pp. 781–782; and C. Belloni, *Francesco Della Croce. Contributo alla storia della Chiesa ambrosiana nel Quattrocento* (Milano 1995).

55 E. Verga, *Un caso di coscienza di Filippo Maria Visconti*, "Archivio Storico Lombardo", 45 (1918), pp. 427–487, in particular, pp. 434, 486–487.

after the deposition of Savoy. On the death of the prince, Bartolomeo had the intuition to side with Francesco Sforza, who rewarded him by sending him to Rome as ambassador to the court of Nicholas V. After a serious illness, he died in April 1457 and was replaced by Giacomo Filippo Crivelli, who Sforza wanted as bishop, to bind the powerful Milanese family to him.⁵⁶

Francesco Sforza, having taken power over the duchy in 1450, if on the one hand he took note of the recovery of the papacy, which had emerged strengthened from the conciliar period, on the other knew how cleverly to shift onto the diplomatic plane the thorny question of the appointment of bishops and other high ecclesiastical dignitaries of the duchy. For this, resident envoys were kept in Rome to negotiate directly with the pope and cardinals on these questions, but at the same time Francesco confirmed the ecclesiastical legislation of his predecessors, which permitted him to intervene in religious matters in the interests of the duchy. On 1 April 1450 Nicholas V granted to Sforza that all benefices to which the pope appointed in ducal territory should be attributed to suitable persons for whom the duke had presented a supplication. An exceptional privilege, which was confirmed, if with some difficulty, by Calixtus III. Yet Sforza, as a realist, accepted that some ecclesiastical offices, above all in the time of Calixtus III and Paul II, should be assigned to figures at the Roman curia, following a logic of "diplomatisation"⁵⁷ supported by his envoys in Rome, where among others Agostino Rossi and Nicodemo Tranchellini were active. By contrast, relations with Pius II were very cordial, so that the duke organized an office to administer all the ecclesiastical property vacant in the duchy, and with papal approval delegated Giacomo Antonio della Torre, bishop of Modena, a man faithful to Sforza, to preside over it. In this way it was possible for the duke really to sell benefices within the duchy, which was certainly simoniacal, but very useful for increasing financial revenues. In Milan he wanted archbishops who would not obscure his fame and would be devoted to him, and so he chose the Cremonese Niccolò Amidani, an old curia hand who had at one time been governor of Rome, but brother of one of his secretaries, and then his own brother, Gabriele Sforza, an Observant Hermit active in the convent of the Incoronata. The pastoral activity of Gabriele was brief, but the prelate was able to leave a mark of intense religious organization, promoting visits to hospitals for the poor and to the country parishes. The information gathered in

56 Somaini, *La Chiesa Novarese tra fine Trecento e metà Cinquecento*, pp. 186–188.

57 The concept has been expressed by A. Prosperi, *'Dominus beneficiorum': il conferimento dei benefici ecclesiastici tra prassi curiale e ragioni politiche negli stati italiani tra '400 e '500*, in *Strutture ecclesiastiche in Italia e in Germania prima della Riforma*, eds. P. Prodi, P. Johannek (Bologna 1984), pp. 51–86, in particular pp. 82–83.

person or through his auxiliary bishop prompted Gabriele to advise his brother to found the Ospedale Maggiore in 1456, an enterprise to which the duchess Bianca Maria also dedicated herself and which was given approval by Pius II in 1458. The preaching to collect funds was carried out by the Franciscan Michele da Carcano, who, with the authorization of the pope, in 1459 promoted the famous “Festa del Perdono” for the feast of the Annunciation, useful to acquire plenary indulgences and effective for the building works of the Ospedale and the Duomo. The money gathered helped to develop the building, on which Filarete and Guiniforte Solari worked. Gabriele died in 1457 and was replaced by Carlo da Forlì, the duke’s man, a bad administrator who burdened the diocese with debts. In 1461 there was a clash between Sforza and Pius II, who imposed a member of the curia on Milan, in the person of Stefano Nardini, governor of the Romagna, who lived in the Roman court for twenty years and for pastoral work in Milan used an auxiliary bishop, and for the reform of monasteries and canonries the usual vicar, Francesco della Croce. The absence of the archbishop allowed the duke to increase his control over the clergy, such that he decided that legal disputes between religious should be dealt with and judged not in Rome, but in Milan.⁵⁸

On the death of Sforza political power passed to his son Galeazzo Maria, who, like his father, knew how to surround himself not only with prelates faithful to him, but also with men who could be useful above all as ambassadors or envoys in Rome, or in government (Branda Castiglioni, bishop of Como), and sometimes as cardinals, for example, in 1473 Stefano Nardini, archbishop of Milan, and Giovanni Arcimboldi, bishop of Novara and then from 1484 archbishop of Milan.⁵⁹ Some years later the Sforza also had a “family cardinal”, Ascanio Sforza (1484),⁶⁰ and a cardinal linked to Cicco Simonetta, the powerful ducal secretary, to whom he was related, Ardicino II della Porta. The major dioceses of the ecclesiastical province were occupied by men closely linked to the dukes, forming dynasties of bishops in the same Lombard dioceses. At Como, after Branda Castiglioni, five Trivulzio governed from 1487 to 1548, both under the Sforza and under Louis XII and Charles V, at Novara in the

58 Ferrari, *Il Quattrocento: dai Visconti agli Sforza*, pp. 338–342; M. Ansani, *La provvista dei benefici (1450–1466). Strumenti e limiti dell'intervento ducale*, in *Gli Sforza, la Chiesa lombarda, la corte di Roma. Strutture e pratiche beneficarie nel ducato di Milano (1450–1535)*, ed. G. Chittolini (Napoli 1989), pp. 1–113.

59 F. Somaini, *Un prelado lombardo del xv secolo. Il cardinale Giovanni Arcimboldi vescovo di Novara, arcivescovo di Milano*, I–III, (Roma 2003).

60 M. Pellegrini, *Ascanio Maria Sforza. La parabola politica di un cardinale-principe del rinascimento*, I–II, (Roma 2002).

same period two Arcimboldi, at Milan three Arcimboldi and two Este, these last related to Ludovico il Moro. At Pavia the diocese was held by Cardinal Giacomo Ammannati Piccolomini, who was very close to Pius II, and then from 1479 by Ascanio Sforza. At Lodi Carlo Pallavicino, linked to Francesco Sforza, presided until 1497 and then Ottavio Maria Sforza, the son of Duke Galeazzo Maria. These episcopal series were brusquely interrupted when the French or the Swiss triumphed in Lombardy; at Novara, for example, the bishop for some years was the bishop of Sion, Cardinal Matteo Schiner, captain of armies and connected to the papal curia. Under Duke Francesco II (1521–1535), who returned to Milan with the Spanish, the pattern was the same as before, and the only novelty was the creation of the diocese of Vigevano, elevated to a city as the ducal residence. These Lombard bishops have been accused of having neglected their pastoral duties and of having augmented the religious crisis in their dioceses, but this accusation was formulated after the Council of Trent, when the Church imposed a categorical duty of residence on prelates. By contrast, the faithful in the fifteenth century were not scandalized by the absence of the bishops, active in Rome in the government of the Church, or at Milan in the political government. In fact, they acted through hard-working vicars, or by means of auxiliary bishops, were in a position to deal swiftly with juridical or administrative problems in Rome, and could easily assist the building of hospitals and the reconstruction of cathedrals with private capital or with their rich benefices. If there was a crisis, this was not only in the Lombard Church, but throughout Christian Europe, then shaken by the Protestant reform.

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The Reformation and the Catholic Revival in the Borromeo's Age

Claudia Di Filippo

An Overview of the Early Sixteenth Century

In May 1521 the *Vicario e Dodici di provvisione di Milano*, responsible for city life, send two messengers to Ferrara to the newly-elected archbishop Ippolito II d'Este:

*Quando sarete giunti...vi presenterete in nome della città nostra...e...spiegherete a Sua Signoria...che nella città e diocesi vi sono molti monasteri di monache che...sono scaduti in una vita e costumi così scandalosi...che offendono la dignità della città e l'onore dei cittadini.*¹

[Once arrived...you will introduce yourselves in the name of our city...and...you will explain to His Lordship...that in the city and the diocese there are many convents of nuns who...have fallen into such scandalous ways of life and habits...that they offend the dignity of the city and the honour of its citizens.]

1521: Luther was becoming a public figure and his pamphlets were circulating in the Milanese State, however they were yet to have an impact on the public opinion. Nevertheless, this document says many interesting things. The world of regular orders, in this instance female, was a source of scandal for lay authorities; in order to attract attention onto these problems and resolve them, the authorities needed to send ambassadors to Ferrara since the archbishop, instead of residing in Milan to tend to his flock, lived with his family at their court. Milan was no different from many other places across Western Europe in which the Church of Rome was facing a time of great difficulty: both structural and moral.

The crisis was a religious one, but also a dynastic, political, and military one, caused by the irreversible decadence of the Sforza rule. At the end of

1 F. Chabod, *Lo Stato e la vita religiosa a Milano nell'epoca di Carlo v*, Turin, 1971, p. 377 (in modern Italian).

the sixteenth century the Italian peninsula had become a land of conquest. Charles VIII began in the Kingdom of Naples over which the Anjou dynasty had historical claims; then Louis XII whose paternal grandmother Valentina was the sister of the last Visconti duke, and then Francis I all sought to gain control over Milan.² Milan, however, was also an imperial fief: and thus began the wars of Italy, in which the French backed duke Maximilian up until 1512, a moment of weakness from the French king on which the military allies of the Helvetic Confederation and the Three Grey Leagues were quick to capitalize, firstly occupying the lands on the present Canton Ticino, secondly the Valtellina, Valchiavenna, and the County of Bormio. Shortly afterwards, the young new king of France, Francis I, defeated the Swiss at Marignano (1515), and temporarily regained possession of the Milanese state, as acknowledged by the Hapsburgs in Noyon in 1516. In 1521 the French were once again forced out and the Sforza dynasty returned under the imperial protection as Francesco II Sforza became Duke: in 1526 however, Francis I Valois, who was a prisoner in Spain, was to abandon forever his interest in Milan with the Treaty of Madrid. The last Sforza duke died early (1535) and as Milan was an imperial fief, the Duchy was devolved to the Empire, much to the disappointment of Ippolito II and the Este family who sided with the French monarch.³ A long debate over the fate of Milan began at the end of which the Emperor chose to retain possession. In 1546 the Emperor made Philip of Castille, who was to become emperor on the abdication of Charles V, duke. The decades that followed were violent and difficult, years of war with the passage of foreign troops and with military occupations; the city emptied, the printers closed their presses, agriculture suffered, poverty increased. These were years of profound change for the Duchy, especially for the city of Milan who then lost its very own court only to become a dominion for centuries.⁴

2 *Passer les monts: Français en Italie- l'Italie en France (1494-1525)*, J. Balsamo ed., Paris-Florence, Honorée Champion éd.-Edizioni Cadmio, 1998; L. Arcangeli, *Milano e Luigi XII. Ricerche sul primo dominio francese in Lombardia (1499-1512)*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2002; S. Meschini, *Luigi XII Duca di Milano. Gli uomini e le istituzioni del primo dominio francese (1499-1512)*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2004; ID., *La Francia nel Ducato di Milano. La politica di Luigi XII (1499-1512)*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2009 (2 vols.) with an up-to-date bibliography.

3 M.C. Giannini, *Ippolito II d'Este arcivescovo di Milano fra interessi familiari e scelte politiche (1535-1550)*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo. Istituzioni, religione e società agli inizi del Cinquecento*, A. Rocca – P. Vismara eds., Milan-Rome, Biblioteca Ambrosiana-Bulzoni Editore, 2012, pp. 115 ff.

4 L. Giordano, *Milano da corte a dominio*, in *Milano e Luigi XII* L. Arcangeli ed., pp. 449 ff.

The Milanese Church: Old 'Abuses' and Hopes of Reform

Within this context, the non-residency of bishops is very relevant. The picture becomes even more complicated by observing the series of bishops of Milan over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1497, duke Ludovico il Moro, whose wife was from the Este family, obtained the position of archbishops for his brother-in-law Ippolito, when he turned eighteen.⁵ Ippolito behaved as a courtly gentleman who was more attracted to literature than to sacred texts: Ariosto dedicated the *Orlando Furioso* to him. On his resignation in 1519, he was substituted by his nephew Ippolito II, who was eleven: an exemplary case of a non-resident bishop. He never lived in Milan and, on two occasions—in 1550 and 1556—he temporarily renounced his position, on the first occasion in favour of Giovan Angelo Arcimboldi (1550–56) and the second for Filippo Archinti (1556–589).⁶

This begs the question, how did the largest diocese of its time in Europe fare without its formal guide? Traditionally Catholic historiography has judged the archbishops who preceded Borromeo negatively so as to highlight the immense difference in style that Borromeo brought. Now the two bishops from the Este dynasty represent the negative face of the Catholic Church of the time, however, even before the times of Saint Carlo Borromeo, not everything was wholly negative.⁷ Civil authorities in Milan had willingly involved themselves in ecclesiastical affairs: with regard to the monasteries under the archbishop Ippolito I, it was Ludovico il Moro himself who was interested in their reform; in the last year in which Ippolito II held the post of archbishop, it was the last of the Sforza dukes, Francesco II, who availed himself of the Dominican Melchiorre Crivelli in order to visit the whole diocese. On the other hand, not all the members of the Milanese curia were absent: Arcimboldi, for example, initiated a vigorous campaign of raising the moral values of the clergy and was diligent in undertaking pastoral visits.

Similar conclusions can be reached moving from the vertices of the diocese down to the bottom level. Secular clergy generally lacked any form of theological, scriptural, or pastoral training: the presbytery were little different to

5 At the age of eight he was archbishop of Esztergom (Hungary) and he was a cardinal at the age of fourteen: he was never consecrated as bishop.

6 Archinti never entered Milan: part of the curia fear his desire for change and Paul IV and Phillip II were against it.

7 G. Chittolini, *Alcune note sui documenti delle visite pastorali degli arcivescovi Nardini e Arcimboldi*, "Studia Borromaica", IX (1995), pp. 37–44.

their congregation,⁸ not so much in moral terms but with regard to the mixture of sacred and profane behaviour that emerges from their 'overwhelmingly lay' participation in the life of the community. Even the regular clergy had their own set of problems, however. The continuous dichotomist discussion between *decadence* and *observance* did not hamper throughout the fifteenth century the establishment of 'new' strict orders such as the Jesuits, the Barnabites, the Somasco, the Theatines, the Oratorians; and could it not also be argued that it brought about the many sixteenth century 'reforms' of older institutions such as the Capuchins, the Cistercians, and the Servites?⁹ The religious history of Milan in the early sixteenth century can be seen as a lesson in avoiding overly rigid judgments, as the topic of *bottom-up reforms*, a common theme throughout the period, is in fact a topic of great complexity, revealing more than spiritual alliances, as we shall now see.

When investigating Milan before the time of Carlo Borromeo in detail, the wealth of spiritual experiences is tremendous. Convents and monasteries, both male and female, were heaving with mystics and charismatics who became an attraction for the *élite* of the city. Illustrations of this can be seen in the Augustinian monastery of Santa Marta and the Benedictine monastery of Santa Margherita in which there were two visionaries whose prophecies were held in high esteem by aristocratic families and the Milanese authorities. The phenomenon of nuns who were *prophetically inspired* in the cities of northern central Italy was quite common during the fifteenth century and in the courts much importance was given to the monasteries of the city whose prayers were habitually trusted. Within this setting, a nun who was seen as particularly *spiritual* was believed to be a precious advisor who was attentively listened to by the Lords themselves.¹⁰ In the 1520s, with the religious turmoil that gripped the whole of Europe, the predicted religious reforms were often linked together with political aspirations of some kind.¹¹ This was also the case in Milan under French rule, when the rupture between Louis XII and Julius II (1510) gave rise to a Gallican Council in which the king of France entreated the council

8 Cf. F. Del Tredici, *Il posto del prete. Sacerdoti, parrocchiani e comunità locali nelle campagne milanesi del Quattrocento*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 243 onwards (bibliography cited in notes); L. Allegra, *Il parroco: un mediatore fra alta e bassa cultura*, in *Storia d'Italia. Annali 4*, Turin, Einaudi, 1982, pp. 895–947.

9 F. Rurale, *Gli Ordini religiosi in età moderna*, Rome, Carocci editore, 2008.

10 *Women and Religion in Medieval Renaissance Italy*, eds. D. Bernstein and R. Rusconi, Chicago/London, The University of Chicago Press, 1996; Zarri, *Profezia politica e santità femminile in Santa Marta: un modello*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 187–202.

11 At a European level see: E. Cameron, *The European Reformation*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991.

assembly *against* the *monarchic* powers of the Papacy. It was in Milan in May 1511 that the convocation of a council to be held that November in Pisa in order to place the Pope in a minority was drafted.¹² On their excommunication, this schismatic group soon moved to Milan, where it was easier for the French to control them, and from there into France. Those few months, however, were very special: the Milanese and the French¹³—illustrious ecclesiastical figures, able jurists, politicians, charismatics—were able to freely discuss differing political scenarios, and, simultaneously, to discuss imminent religious reforms, the anti-popes, and even the possibility of canonizing Girolamo Savonarola, the Dominican friar—an Italian Luther—burnt alive at the stake in Florence in 1498 for his preaching in which Church reform mixed together with dangerous observations on social justice.

The Monastery of Santa Marta was one of these *laboratories*. Therein we find a mystic, Arcangela Panigarola, of a noble and established Milanese family, a visionary who, like Savonarola, prophesised terrible punishments—*fame, peste, ferro* (hunger, plague, and war)—caused by a church that was incapable of reforming itself; woeful prophecies that the French prelates in Milan at that time were keen to use against the Papacy. With regard to the monastery of Santa Margherita, there was another *charismatic*, Maria Caterina Brugora, of humble origins but nevertheless considered to be a *living saint*; her prophecies and visions were collected and transcribed by her confessor and then carefully preserved¹⁴ by her *discepoli*: often members of the most important families of the city.

The dual creation of the regular clerics of San Paolo Decollato and the order of angelic nuns of San Paolo Converso forms a key example of this complex and interesting history. The orders were founded by a Dominican, Battista Carioni, known as fra' Battista da Crema, a contemporary and confrere of Savonarola, who also wanted to see reform. His idea of reform consisted of a personal conversion to be achieved through a tiring and voluntary internal journey towards *perfection* in order to become *akin to God*. He decided to disseminate his teaching through printing and his works received a good degree of success. He later established the two congregations with economic and political help from a rich and powerful Milanese noblewoman, Countess Lodovica Torelli, Lady of Guastalla, for whom he had become confessor, chaplain, and spiritual guide. This happened in 1530 and, in the space of a few years, the countess sold her goods in order to fund these 'new' communities which immediately

12 Who immediately replied with the convocation of the fifth Lateran Council.

13 On this climate, cf. Arcangeli, *Milano e Luigi XII*.

14 They were deduced from *Apocalypsis Nova* di Amedeo Menez de Sylva.

found favour with the Milanese élite. These communities were born of spontaneous aggregations, much more like the confraternities than traditional religious orders, independent of the local church despite them being attended by ecclesiastical heavy weights such as the inquisitor Melchiorre Crivelli. Another aspect of this community that was very unusual was that men and women were in close contact, indeed, the women were enormously influential in them. For a long time a young nun, Virginia Negri who took the name Angelica Paola Antonia, as a living saint exercised almost total control over the male congregation (Barnabites) and the female congregation (Angelics). All these factors led to weighty accusations; nevertheless, for quite some time the support of the families bound to these congregations allowed them, in both Milan and Rome, effective cover.¹⁵

Significantly different but equally important was the religious education of young people; another issue at the forefront of the urban environment of the central northern part of Italy since the fifteenth century.¹⁶ In the state of Milan, this process began in the 1530s through the work of the priest Castellino da Castello. Legend has it that, at the end of November 1536, together with a number of lay people, he offered apples to the young people who loitered in front of the church of Santi Giacomo e Filippo in which he was the minister, inviting them to enter into what was to become a veritable centre of catechism.¹⁷ Three years later, still working with lay people, he established the *Compagnia della Reformatione Christana in Carità* however this name was too reminiscent of the feared protestant Reform so it was changed to in *Compagnia dei Servi di Puttini in Carità* and under this name it became very well known. Its Rules were approved in 1540 and officially edited in 1552. As the title of the organisation suggests, the main aim was to charitably aid the poorest children, in both human and Christian senses of charity. It is interesting to see that its structure, which was typical of medieval confraternities, was entirely lay, even though it was led by a priest, known as *priore*, Castellino himself to begin with, and

15 The Barnabites were recognised in 1533 and the Angeliche in 1535, they were denounced because they were contiguous to heretical doctrine *ab Ecclesia damnatae, praesertim beguinarum et pauperum de Lugduno nuncupatae* (C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Fra Battista da Crema*, p. 208); the backing of the inquisitor Crivelli brought absolution.

16 Cf. P.F. Grendler, *Books and Schools in the Italian Renaissance*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1995; ID., *Fifteenth-Century Catechesis, the Schools of Christian Doctrine, and the Jesuits*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 291 onwards also for related bibliography.

17 A. Bianchi, *Le Scuole di Dottrina Cristiana: linguaggio e strumenti per una azione educativa 'di massa'*, in *Carlo Borromeo e l'opera della "Grande Riforma". Cultura, religione e arti nella Milano del pieno Cinquecento* F. Buzzi and D. Zardin eds., Milan, Credito Artigiano, 1997, pp. 145 onward.

assisted by a *confessore*. The lay members were initially twenty four in number; however this figure grew exponentially in tandem with the need of a new form of educating the faithful.

The first few decades of the sixteenth century in Milan seem, therefore, to be characterised by absenteeism on the part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the diocese for which the counterpart spiritual poverty of the Milanese population cannot be identified: on the contrary, it is this very lack of tight control that permitted the city to become a laboratory for unusual experiments that serve as a record of the extent to which, as Fébvre asserted, the problem of a bottom-up personal *reform* had been perceptible and present in Europe for some time by members of religious orders and lay people alike.¹⁸

The Challenge of Reformed Ideas

Less tight control could, however, be dangerous, given that large quantities of reformist pamphlets were being distributed through printing houses. Also because the Duchy, despite having lost control over a sizable number of Alpine passes, remained an important thoroughfare for people and goods travelling between northern Italy, France, the Helvetic Confederation, the Venetian dominion of 'Terraferma', the Grey Leagues, Savoy, Genoa: and together with people and goods travelled books and ideas.¹⁹ It was in Pavia, the location of the only University of the State, that the first Lutheran and Zwinglian writings arrived, through the actions of two publishers, Francesco and Andrea Calvi.²⁰ Censorship of books began in Milan not because of the absentee archbishop, but once again because of Duke Francesco II, who in 1523 issued an edict on 'heretical' books.²¹ In Milan as elsewhere in Italy, the criticisms made by Luther and Zwingli initially found a ready sounding board in members of ecclesiastical orders, particularly Augustinians and Franciscans, that is, those who were genuinely interested in the topic of Church *reform*,²² and who propagated their

18 L. Febvre, *Studi su Riforma e Rinascimento*, Turin, Einaudi, 1966.

19 *The Reformation and the Book*, ed. by J.F. Gilmont, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1998.

20 Celio Secondo Curione was also present in Pavia, one of the exiles in dissent with Calvin (S. Peyronel Rambaldi, *Celio Secondo Curione*, in *Fratelli d'Italia. Riformatori italiani nel Cinquecento* M. Biagioni – M. Duni – L. Felici eds., Turin, Claudiana, 2011, pp. 35–44).

21 F. Chabod, *Lo Stato*. Especially the last section, *Per la storia religiosa dello Stato di Milano*, pp. 231 onward.

22 C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Predicazione e dissimulazione nell'Italia del Cinquecento*, in *Per Marino Berengo. Studi degli allievi*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2000, pp. 224–251.

ideas through itinerant preaching. This oral diffusion of ideas that was both public and popular was characterized in the early phases by a theology that was rather generic in nature. The Italian anomaly is still very much debated with some attributing it to a critical stance, perhaps secretly indifferent, deriving from humanism and leaning towards 'paganism', and others attributing it to an *alumbrada* influence due to the presence of Juan de Valdes.²³ The reason for the peculiarity of the situation in Italy could, in fact, be simply based on a lack of direct knowledge of the reformers' writings, and what was well understood was only the polemic against the high Church. In this way, arguments concerning justification by faith alone, the attacks on superstitions as well as those on the cult of saints and of the Virgin were all listened to but without any genuine desire to break with the church in Rome. In a word, we find the form of criticism adopted by Erasmus:²⁴ the arguments were *for* reform rather than *against* the Church. At that time Humanist cardinals still held strong positions within the Roman Curia, and these cardinals entered into dialogue with the reformed churches which in turn maintained for a long time a level of ambiguity surrounding the very term *reform*. The hotbeds of reform were not Milan, where surveillance was higher, but rather Pavia, the University town with high numbers of foreign students in which ideas could spread quickly by word of mouth. Another centre of reform was Cremona, at a crossroads with trade routes from Venetian territories, and where, as early as 1525 the royal commissioner issued a proclamation against the *Lutherans* present in that city, and in 1528 the Dominican prior Bartolomeo Maturo fled Cremona for foreign soil.²⁵ There was also a well-organised heterodox group active in Casalmaggiore; the *Ecclesia Cremonensis*.²⁶ One final note: both incentives towards internal reform and strongly polemical standpoints culminate in the same decade, the 1530s, however with very different outcomes.

The 1540s proved to be a veritable rupture. In 1542 in Rome, with a prevalence of unbending cardinals, dialogue with the protestant world was deemed

23 D. Cantimori, *Eretici italiani*, Florence, Sansoni, 1939 'invented' the category of 'heretics'; then A. Rotondo, *Studi di storia ereticale del Cinquecento*, Turin, Giappichelli, 1974; M. Firpo, *Tra alumbados e spirituali: studi su Juan de Valdes e il valdesianesimo nella crisi religiosa del '500 italiano*, Florence, Olshki, 1990.

24 On these ambiguities: S. Seidel Menchi, *Erasmus in Italia, 1520-1580*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 1987.

25 Chabod, *Lo Stato* pp. 313 onward; S. Caponetto, *La Riforma protestante nell'Italia del Cinquecento*, Turin, Claudiana, 1992, p. 180 e pp. 272 onward.

26 The people of Cremona were the second Italian community in Geneva, after people from Lucca: they were responsible for Calvin's polemic against Nicodemism (Felici, *Giovanni Calvino* pp. 79 onward).

to have failed. Thus, preempting a council that was not forthcoming, Rome set up a new inquisition, the Roman inquisition, very different from the Spanish version, with the remit of clearly distinguishing between orthodoxy and heresy.²⁷ Calvinism also appeared on the scene at this time that soon became established in strong, cohesive communities characterized by obligatory evangelism and therefore little inclined toward dialogue. This difference was soon to be felt throughout the Italian Peninsula: as soon as the almost random distribution of Lutheranism and Zwinglianism was replaced with the well-organized and informed distribution of the church of Geneva, missionary preachers took advantage of this network and texts opportunely translated into Italian vernacular were distributed throughout Italy, not just in cities, as the case of the Garfagnana, a rugged valley in Tuscany, demonstrates.²⁸ The presence of the Inquisition led to those most compromised²⁹ fleeing Italy to the nearby Helvetic territory, particularly the Valtellina: an Italo-phone region under the rule of the Three Grey Leagues, where from 1526 the equality of Catholic and Zwinglian faiths was recognized.³⁰ The very presence of these 'heretical' Italians who were often unable to assimilate themselves to the new churches, however, provided great stimulus to the organization of the synods in the Three Grey Leagues from 1549 when the Zwinglian church merged with the church at Geneva.³¹ Two pugnacious churches were in confrontation. In the 1540s and 1550s, however, there were fewer members of religious orders and more lay people present: in 1559 the Senate of Milan, an independent organization of local self-governance, called to the city Aonio Paleario as a teacher

27 The group holding the 'dialogue' maintained dialectic almost until the end of the century.

28 Caponetto, *La Riforma* pp. 337 onwards and elsewhere; L. Felici, *Giovanni Calvino e l'Italia*, Turin, Claudiana, 2010.

29 The first was that of Bernardino Ochino, general of the new order of Capuchins and a famous preacher (cf. R.H. Bainton, *Bernardino Ochino, esule e riformatore senese del Cinquecento, 1487-1563*, Florence, Sansoni, 1940). On the cultural climate, *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy*, ed. G. Fragnito, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

30 A. Pastore, *Nella Valtellina, nel tardo Cinquecento: fede, cultura, società*, Milan, Sugraco, 1975; ID. (ed.), *Riforma e società nei Grigioni: Valtellina e Valchiavenna tra '500 e '600*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 1991; C. Di Filippo, *Una terra lombarda perduta: il "Ticino" and Una terra lombarda ritrovata: la Valtellina, Bormio e Chiavenna*, in *La formazione della Lombardia contemporanea*, Milan-Brai, Cariplo-Laterza, 1998, pp. 105-213; EAD, *Le frontiere religiose della Lombardia: il rinnovamento cattolico nella zona ticinese e retica fra '500 e '600*, Milan, Unicopli, 1999.

31 U. Pfister, *Chiese confessionali e pratica religiosa*, in *Storia dei Grigioni, L'Età moderna*, vol. II, Coira-Bellinzona, Progrigioni Italiano-Casagrande, 2000, pp. 209-43.

in the prestigious Palatine Schools, an illustrious Humanist and follower of Erasmus who, following various vicissitudes, found himself on the rack in Rome in 1570 as a heretic.³²

Carlo Borromeo

His Family and his Education

This was the situation of religious turmoil that gripped Italy when, during the final year of governance of Ippolito II, Giovanni Angelo Medici was procurator general of the archbishop. Elected pope in 1559 with the name Pius IV, he became at the same time archbishop of Milan and, according to the customs of the time, named as administrator for the diocese his nephew Carlo Borromeo. The year was 1560 and it was to be a crucial turning point.³³

Second son of count Gilberto Borromeo and Margherita de' Medici, the sister of the Medici pope, his family owned a veritable 'State' around Lake Maggiore bordering onto the Helvetic Confederation. Set on the path of an ecclesiastical career from a very young age, he received his tonsure at the age of seven and also his first appointment as commendatory abbot. His education was primarily in law.³⁴ A few days after becoming pope, Pius IV called Borromeo to his side as *Cardinal nepote* (a position that allowed him to have at his disposition in the Curia a person of utmost trustworthiness), thus giving him enormous power as secretary of state in an ever-increasing series of important positions that came before his ecclesiastical obligations.

Thus we find ourselves within the 'normality' of the time: a dynastic house with its power strategies at work in Lombardy and likewise in the Roman Curia, a young man who had accumulated honours and positions from childhood, who had followed the traditional juridical *curriculum*, the key to both a civil and a religious *cursus honorum*, and who delighted in composing poems. With regard to the latter point, in Rome Borromeo founded the *Accademia*

32 S. Caponetto, *Aonio Paleario (1503–1570) e la Riforma protestante in Toscana*, Turin, Claudiana, 1979.

33 On Borromeo: *San Carlo Borromeo, Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, eds. J.M. Headley – J.B. Tomaro, Washington – London – Toronto, 1988; *San Carlo e il suo tempo*, 2 vols., Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1986; *Carlo Borromeo e l'opera della "Grande Riforma"*; D. Zardin, *Carlo Borromeo: cultura, santità, governo*, Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 2010. Simply using the epistolary holdings of the Ambrosiana library (which have not been entirely digitised) it is possible to discover new findings on Carlo.

34 He graduated in Civil and Canonical Law from Pavia in 1569.

delle Notti Vaticane, a humanistic group, traces of which can be seen in Milan in his private study adjacent to his bed chamber.³⁵ Carlo matured rapidly in Rome faced with Europe ravaged by violent religious clashes: between 1559 and 1560 the presence of the Huguenots began to feel threatening in France. The wars of religion lasted for thirty years, almost jeopardizing the survival of the State. At the same time in the Netherlands guerrilla warfare began that in over twenty years of clashes between Catholics and Calvinists was to lead to the Spanish losing the north of the country and to the formation of the Republic of the United Provinces. Borromeo, from his vantage point in Rome, clearly saw the aggressive behaviour of Calvinist Reform and the risks that the Church of Rome was running. In 1562, the year of the last council of Trent, Carlo did not go to Trent, but from Rome he organized, directed and, via the papal legates, pulled the strings of the council, amongst the difficulties and the continuous threat of suspension that was avoided only thanks to the arrival of the French cardinals who set out these dramatic military problems.

His 'Conversion'

In Rome Borromeo had frequent contact with the Jesuits, particularly with Francisco Ribera. Through this contact with the Jesuit fathers, Borromeo gained a new spirit; he learned to appreciate their missionary leaning; and eventually absorbed their values: vocational gravity, sobriety, complete dedication to the cause of internal reform of the Church at Rome.³⁶ If it had been the abuses of the church at the end of the fifteenth century that had generated the protestant reform, as Carlo and all the great Catholic ecclesiastics of his time believed, only a series of personal conversions could remedy it. Carlo had not ruled out a goal of mysticism, desiring to *free himself from all worldly concerns*, however he was called back to his *duty* by the Portuguese primate Bartolomeo de' Martyribus in that it would have been *dangerous for the Church and for his conscience [...] to remove himself from those duties and commitments that could easily fall into the hands of people of very different sentiment [...]*.³⁷

In November 1562, Borromeo's elder brother Federico died. Federico had been destined to take over the family's estate and continue the family line and on his death the family attempted to convince Carlo to substitute him. Carlo,

35 Cf. C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Fra libri e lettere, appunti e progetti manoscritti: la biblioteca ecclesiastica "selecta" per il governo della Milano di Carlo Borromeo*, "Studia Borromaica", 1998 (12), pp. 17–37.

36 P. Paschini, *Cinquecento romano e Riforma cattolica*, Romae, Lateranum, 1958, pp. 93 onward. The quotation is on p. 148.

37 Ivi, p. 142.

however, hastened the time of his formal entry into the Church: in July 1563 he was made chancel and shortly after bishop. In May 1564 he became archbishop of Milan; however the death of his uncle and his necessary participation in the conclave that was to elect Pius v kept him in Rome until the spring of 1566. By the end of 1564, however, Carlo had his grip firmly around his diocese through the intervention of excellent vicars, such as Niccolò Ormaneto, already an associate of Matteo Giberti, bishop of Verona and an *ante litteram* model of Tridentine reform.³⁸ Giberti himself had also held positions of great prestige in Rome, however on becoming bishop, he had left everything in order to fully engage with the problems of his diocese.

This was, in fact, the plan. Once the new Pope was elected, Borromeo left Rome and all his power in order to live in Milan as resident bishop. As supervisor of the council, he became its most resolute creator: no longer a universal council but a council intent on reforming the structure of the church and its pastoral duties within a rigidly Catholic theology. He found himself, therefore, with written decrees set out in front of him, the execution of which needed to be carried out: the 'myth' of Carlo Borromeo as *deus ex machina* who built a *reformed* church from nothing needs to be corrected. His letters and his personal library prove that he was in constant contact with bishops and the ecclesiastics of his time, be they Italian, Spanish, Iberian, German, or even English.³⁹ Everyone was questioning 'how' in real terms to put the council into practice, exchanging projects, directives, and advice: the application of the council of Trent was being established through a slow, cooperative, and unanimous work of experimental approximation that was taking place directly 'on the field'.⁴⁰

Archbishop of Milan: The Council takes on the Form of 'Law'

The reform instigated by Borromeo had peculiar characteristics. His experience in Rome allowed him to conceive of a project of reform of great breadth. The entire structure of the Milanese church was reformulated based on Tridentine principles. As Borromeo had studied law, the modality of this reformulation was normative. The lifestyle of clerics, reform of female monasteries, confraternities, management of ecclesiastical assets, the structure of churches,

38 A. Prosperi, *Tra evangelismo e Controriforma: Gian Matteo Giberti, 1495–1543*, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2011 (11 ed.); H. Jedin, *Il tipo ideale di vescovo secondo la riforma cattolica*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1985 (1959).

39 C. di Filippo Bareggi, *Fra libri e lettere*, e EAD, *La Biblioteca di san Carlo*, in *San Carlo e l'opera della "Grande Riforma"*, pp. 337–364.

40 As was the Jesuit drafting of the *Ratio studiorum*. Cf. also J. Tomaro, *San Carlo Borromeo and the Implementation of the Council of Trent*, in *San Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 67–84.

façades, altars, windows, decorations, sacristies, liturgy, administration of the sacraments—particularly that of confession—rules for preaching, the obligation of every church to possess the decrees and the Tridentine *Catechism*, regulations for printers and publishers: these and many others were reviewed becoming, through the continuous work of eleven diocesan synods and six provincial councils, the ‘law’ of the ‘new’ Milanese church. In addition to creating normative legislation, Borromeo concerned himself with the repercussions of what had been decided. The dispositions of Milan and the Tridentine decrees were printed for obligatory possession, in specially designed cabinets, in all the sacristies of all parishes. Pastoral visits then checked whether these conditions had been met. Borromeo traipsed all over the Milanese state on the back of a mule, even to the most impervious mountain areas that bordered with the protestant world, carrying with him the Tridentine decrees, the Milanese dispositions, together with catechisms and various books.

Initially, the curia drew up contracts with printers operating in Milan; later the cardinal, realizing the importance of printing and the possibilities of its practical application, established an archiepiscopal typography in order to produce works that could educate both spiritually and morally.⁴¹ From 1582, all the legislation that had been issued in the previous twenty years was collected, published, and made available in the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*. This work contributed to the distribution of the Milanese approach to fulfilling the Council decrees not only throughout the Italian peninsula, but also in Europe and the New World.⁴²

The Central Pillars of Reform

1 The Clergy

For the conciliar fathers, the first remedy was the reform of the secular clergy, the work of a bishop in residence and caring of his flock. Borromeo founded numerous seminaries in order to re-educate the clergy. The problem was not, however, simply an economic one: where was he to find the teachers in order to reform the priests? In Milan, as elsewhere, it was the Jesuits who came to his aid with their highly trained members: their aims did not always, however,

41 Cf. C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Libri e letture nella Milano di san Carlo Borromeo*, in *Stampa, libri e letture a Milano nell'età di Carlo Borromeo*, N. Raponi and A. Turchini eds., Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 1992, pp. 39–96; ivi, K.M. Stevens, *Printings and Politics: Carlo Borromeo and the Seminary Press of Milan* (pp. 97–133); *Milano borromaica atelier culturale della Controriforma*, D. Zardin and M.L. Frosio eds., Rome, Bulzoni, 2007.

42 Cf. *San Carlo Borromeo, Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics*, The definitive version was edited by Federico Borromeo in 1599.

coincide. Borromeo noticed that the Jesuits tended towards a more humanistic and less pastoral approach: and, moreover, that they were training priests to be future members of the Company. The collaboration ceased and Borromeo established the Oblates of Sant'Ambrogio,⁴³ a congregation of secular priests who lived a communal life, directly dependent on the bishop, who were delegated the management of the seminaries, but who were also trained for a 'mission' into Swiss territory. What became of established priests? Visits checked their training, everyday life, habits (including sexual), residency, effective care of their flock. There were censorious repercussions, however, from the sources Borromeo's figure seems to be that of a pragmatic man, more pastor than censor. The monthly congregations of clergy, held by various vicars including the *foranei*—vicars who represented the bishop away from Milan, provided concentrated refresher courses in pastoral duties, especially regarding confidential cases of conscience. Congregations were also required to maintain another elective instrument of the new Church: preaching. Priests were invited to send to the curia transcriptions of their own sermons, some of which have been partially conserved. There were no dispositions regarding regular clergy, who remained outside the control of the bishop. This was one of the unresolved issues of the Council of Trent, with the exception of female monasteries for which the archbishop followed the decisions made in Rome that called the nuns back to their original rule and imposed respect of strict rules of seclusion.

2 Care of the Layperson

The Council of Trent gave only passing attention towards laypeople, who were entirely entrusted to the care of the presbyters.⁴⁴ Borromeo, however, understood that the only way to influence society was through them. The attention he paid to the education of boys and girls demonstrates this. Immediately grasping the usefulness of the *Compagnia del Castellino*, he took it into hand, giving it new rules (1568) and altering it into a clerical structure dependent on the parish. In 1569, when its presences in every parish became obligatory, he transformed it into the foundation of all education of young people.⁴⁵ The

43 F. Rurale, *I gesuiti a Milano. Religione e politica nel secondo Cinquecento*, Rome, Bulzoni Editore, 1992.

44 A. Prosperi, *Clerics and Laymen in the Work of Carlo Borromeo*, in *San Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 112–138.

45 In 1564 in the city there would have been 28, at the end of the century 740 for 12,000 pupils, thousands of adults were involved (*Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, Tabelle, coll. 1184–85). A. Turchini, *Sotto l'occhio del padre: società confessionale e istruzione primaria nello Stato di Milano*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996.

teachings of the Sunday school were very simple: the Lord's Prayer, Ave Maria, the Credo, the commandments, and a few others learnt off by heart: knowledge of letters and the alphabet of these prevalently disadvantaged boys and girls added up to just a basic smattering.⁴⁶

The presence of girls posed an additional problem because they could only be taught by women. Borromeo barely bothered about women; however he understood the importance of mothers in the education of their children and in household management and he thus brought into play another lay congregation established in the 1530s from an autonomous desire for a bottom-up reform: the *Compagnia delle Vergini di Sant'Orsola*. Founded in Brescia in 1535 and suggested to Borromeo by one of his earliest collaborators from Verona, it was a *female* congregation of spiritual leaning,⁴⁷ entirely lay and entrusted only to the Holy Spirit by its founder Angela Merici: a very modern form of apostolate made up of consecrated laywomen active in society but originally living in their own homes.⁴⁸ Borromeo seized the opportunities offered by an informal structure with very low costs, drafted new rules and clericalized the congregation binding it to the parish. In part he stripped it of its original nature, saving however the original institution: the Milanese rules allowed the Ursulines of Saint Carlo—as they were to be called later—as laywomen to be exempt from seclusion; free from this because it became their duty to work in the parishes as doctrinal teachers for girls.⁴⁹

His treatment of the Pauline congregations was rather different. He reduced the countess Torelli to silence, he imprisoned Negri, the angelicas became a cloistered order with very little consideration; the time of the charismatics and the *living saints* was at an end. This was the time of a clerical and chauvinistic church which closed nuns behind heavy iron grates, delegating their care

46 X. Toscani, *Scuole e alfabetismo nello Stato di Milano da Carlo Borromeo alla Rivoluzione*, Brescia, La Scuola, 1993; P.F. Grendler, *Borromeo and the Schools of Christian Doctrine*, in *San Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 158–171.

47 It was the women who gave the directives to their confessor in reality; cf. the *ordini istruttori di padri confessori de la Compagnia di santa Orsola* (Archivio Storico Civico di Brescia and Archivio *Compagnia di S. Orsola di Brescia*) commented by Giampietro Belotti.

48 The history of the various Ursuline congregations is complex, see *La sponsalità dai monasteri al secolo. La diffusione del carisma di Sant'Angela Merici nel mondo*, X. Toscani e G. Belotti eds., Brescia, Centro mericiano, 2009. For the congregations of San Paolo, Ivi, pp. 459–490, C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *La Compagnia di sant'Orsola nell'area lombarda*.

49 C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Le donne nella chiesa borromaica*, "Studia Borromaica", 20 (2006), pp. 155–184; EAD, *Chierici e laici nella Chiesa tridentina: educare per riformare*, Milan, CUEM, 2003, pp. 56 ff.

to confessors who were inclined to view them as *simulatrici*.⁵⁰ As for male congregations: the Barnabites were 'refounded': a *damnatio memoriae* was placed on the figure of Battista Carioni, the rules were modified following serious internal division; the archbishop, however, remained close to these fathers, in whom he recognized a zeal and mystic virtue equal to his own and in whom he often personally trusted from a spiritual point of view. With regard to this congregation also, Borromeo changed its spirit, making it into an instrument serving his project.

Different directions can be seen, therefore, in the actions of the first Borromeo, which did not always fall into the category of 'counter-reformist'. A pastoral intelligence able to outline large coherent projects flanked a censorious side, which was itself ambiguous. Take the case of laypeople, for example. They depended on their presbyters in their education on catechism and in their knowledge of Scripture, that was only filtered through their preaching; they were spiritually guided through confession, an instrument of control against heresy and against everything superstitious or licentious such as carnival, dancing, playing cards, and so on.⁵¹ In the careful dispositions given by Borromeo to the confessors, he asked them, however, to advise everyone—women or men, laymen or not—to read precise spiritual texts:⁵² in the same way as the Jesuits, for Borromeo penitence became a learning opportunity, capable of 'prevention'. Also for the laypeople, families on the one side and workshops on the other, Borromeo wrote two texts: a *Memoriale* released shortly after the plague of 1576–77 and a *Libretto de i ricordi*, released in 1578 both addressed *diretti al suo diletto popolo della città et diocesi di Milano* and present in the *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*. In these works, he placed the responsibility of spiritual and moral care of sons, daughters, servants, *garzoni*, onto the family father and the workshop master, in order to make the nucleus

50 On this change, A. Prosperi, *Dalle "divine madri" ai "padri spirituali"*, in E. Schulte van Kessel, ed, *Women and men in spiritual culture XIV–XVII Centuries*, The Hague, Netherlands Government Publishing Office, 1986, pp. 71–90; G. Zarri, *Monasteri femminili e città (secoli XV–XVIII)*, in *Storia d'Italia, Annali* IX G. Chittolini and G. Miccoli eds., Turin, Einaudi, 1986, pp. 359–429; *Donne e fede*, L. Scaraffia and G. Zarri eds., Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1994; *Donna, disciplina, creanza cristiana dal XV al XVII secolo*, G. Zarri ed, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1996.

51 Was there a betrayal of the secrecy of the confessional? E. Brambilla, *Alle origini del Sant'Uffizio. Penitenza, confessione e giustizia spirituale dal medioevo al XVI secolo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2000; W. de Boer, *The Conquest of the Soul*, Leiden, Koninklijke Brill, 2001 (Turin, Einaudi, trad. it. 2004).

52 C. di Filippo Bareggi, *Libri e letture per laici nella Milano borromaica*, "Studia Borromaica", 21 (2007), pp. 347–366.

of a well-organized and very much watched over society that was honest and virtuous, that lived a sober life and was able to well use time and money: not particularly distant from Geneva at the same time.⁵³

Tridentine Innovations: or Rather, a Difficult Reform

This was not a voluntary project: the adjustments were difficult and they were not peacefully accepted even by the Milanese ecclesiastics. The Humiliati, an old medieval order, attempted to assassinate Borromeo by firing at him, fortunately without success: the order was dissolved and the estate used to finance new pastoral care.⁵⁴ We have already spoken about the Jesuits.⁵⁵ The reform caused great friction with the aristocratic families who little appreciated the moralization of the convents and monasteries to which they had sent their sons and daughters thinking to provide them with an essentially lay life. The clericalization of the confraternities and charitable organizations and the church's meddling in the management of the estates of these organizations also met with little welcome.⁵⁶ The most serious conflicts occurred with the governing authorities. The archbishop wrote to Phillip II that he was only seeking *il servizio di Dio et . . . la salute delle anime*. The application of the Tridentine decrees, however, envisaged a rupture of the centuries-old link between noble families and ecclesiastic institutions, and what is more, in order to put the reform into action, especially following the publication of the bull *In Coena Domini* in 1568, the Council presupposed a jurisdictional power eroded by civil authorities which was felt by the Spanish as intolerable. In 1569, the canons of Santa Maria della Scala (of royal patronage) reacted to Borromeo's desire for control with weapons. The conflicts with the Spanish governors concerning the jurisdiction of *foro misto* cases occurred in the succession of governors from Albuquerque to Requeséns. Requeséns commanded the archbishop to limit his *famiglia armata*,⁵⁷ but he was excommunicated. The governor suggested to the Spanish king to ban Borromeo from the State of Milan *como el*

53 C. Di Filippo Bareggi, in *Stampa, libri e letture a Milano nell'età di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 39–96; D. Zardin, *La "perfezione" nel proprio "stato": strategie per la riforma generale dei costumi nel modello borromeo di governo*, in *San Carlo e l'opera*, pp. 115–128.

54 For example, the founding of the Helvetic College.

55 F. Rurale, *Carlo Borromeo, Botero, Mazzarino: incontri e scontri nella ridefinizione del potere sacerdotale e della politica 'moderna'* in *San Carlo e l'opera*, pp. 289–302.

56 D. Zardin, *Confraternite e vita di pietà nelle campagne lombarde tra '500 e '600*, Milano, NED, 1981; ID. *Riforma cattolica e resistenze nobiliari nella diocesi di Milano di Carlo Borromeo*, Milan, Jaca Book, 1983.

57 His "famiglia armata" armed family, his prisons, worried the Spanish authorities and scandalized the reformed (S. Peyronel, *Inquisizione, controllo delle coscienze e società nella*

mayor reblede que nunca Vuestra Majestad ha tenido. He was not heeded; however Requeséns captured the stronghold at Arona on Lake Maggiore, part of the personal estate of Borromeo: he was no longer allowed to receive communion. Borromeo was recalled to Rome and accused of excessive zeal, where he intelligently clarified that, as bishop, he was obliged, on pain of incurring personal criticism, make himself the 'executor' of the Tridentine reform and that, with regard to the friction with political authorities, only Rome was able to respond. In 1580 he made peace with Phillip II, sending Carlo Bascapè, the Barnabite who had re-written the rules of his congregation, to Madrid in order to wipe out any suspicion of scant loyalty: his fame of sanctity did the rest. The peace, however, was transitory.

The Censorious Aspect

Borromeo exhibited much inflexibility with regard to the *plague* of Protestantism: priests, teachers, doctors, surgeons, obstetricians were all compelled to make a profession of faith, which was soon extended to publishers and printers. Those who had relationships with the protestant world were closely watched: foreign students in Pavia, or Swiss and German merchants working in Lombardy. Even Milanese merchants who travelled in the reformed territories underwent specific checks and Borromeo reserved a particular level of attention for the Ticino and Grison regions which, despite being outside the state of Milan, were considered a fundamental *bastion* against *heresy*.⁵⁸ Borromeo visited five times the three valleys of Milan, the Leventine, Blenio, and Riviera, which were dependent on him; in Milan he founded the Helvetic College from which emerged the 'new' Tridentine priests to send across the borders; he intervened in Lucerne in order to reinforce the Catholic confederal front; he also worked in favour of the bishop of Coira, prisoner in a reformed chapter or perhaps in exile;⁵⁹ he tried, in vane, to visit the Valtellina; he was called in *soccorso*, to aid, in the Val Mesolcina by the valley's council because of the number of witches present:⁶⁰ there was no inquisition there and the civil

Lombardia spagnola, in *L'Italia delle cento città*, a cura di M.L. Cicalese e A. Musi, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2005, pp. 176–188.

58 C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Le frontiere religiose della Lombardia*; EAD, *Stato e riforma della chiesa fra '500 e '600. Il Ticino e le Tre Leghe a confronto*, in *Confessionalizzazione e conflittualità confessionale nei Grigioni fra '500 e '700*, Zürich, Chronos Verlag, 2006, pp. 183–205.

59 *Storia dei Grigioni*, vol. II, *L'età moderna*, Coira, Pro Grigioni Italiano, Bellinzona, Casa-grande, 2000.

60 C. Di Filippo Bareggi, *Crinali alpini e passi, frontiere linguistiche, politici, religiosi fra '500 e '600: la Val Mesolcina*, in *Alle frontiere della Lombardia. Politica, guerra e religione nell'età moderna* C. Donati ed., Milan, Franco Angeli, 2006, pp. 41–70.

tribunal was deemed to be incompetent. Borromeo was severe with heterodoxy and heresy, traces of which have been accurately reconstructed for the period by the pastor Maselli,⁶¹ he was also harsh in his condemnation of the Lombard witches, even though, compared to the numerous trials, the number of actual convictions was in reality rather scarce.⁶²

The Borromaic Model in the State of Milan

On his death on 3 November 1584, Borromeo left a well-organised Tridentine diocese rich in well-‘stabilized’ clergy. At the centre were three vicars—general, civil, criminal—and a chancellor and a visitor general. There were six vicarial districts in the city and six for the rural areas, divided into *foranei* parsonages. These parsonages, which held considerable authority in terms of decision-making in their delicate role of coordination between the centre and the hinterland—often the most distant and difficult areas such as the borders with the protestant world—, were the ones that allowed Borromeo to create a vast and extensive network in order to control but also to educate the new church born out of the Council.⁶³ His example was destined to spread throughout *Milanesado*. The ecclesiastical province of Milan was geographically vast.⁶⁴ Borromeo used provincial councils to export his model and used both his personal prestige and that of his family in order to obtain the appointment of ecclesiastics who were close to him.

The outcomes regarding the various relationships between state and church and inter-state relations were different. In Lodi, the proceedings of the synod of the bishops Taverna and Seghizzi were actually revised in Milan. In the diocese on the borders, the exportation of the Milanese model was more complex. In Novara, that was incorporated into the Duchy in the middle of the fifteenth century but located on the militarized borders with Piedmont, followers of Valdes and Huguenots were still present in the 1560s. Spain wanted Milanese bishops of proven loyalty in this town: Borromeo managed to send Cesare Speciano and then Carlo Bascapé, his closest collaborators. A similar situation,

61 D. Maselli, *Saggi di storia ereticale lombarda al tempo di s. Carlo*, Naples, Società Editrice Napoletana, 1979, with Spanish, Venetian, and Evangelical sources.

62 Four for *luteranesimo*; with regard to the witches in the Moesano, 130 abjured, and 10 were burnt at the stake. However, A. Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza. Inquisitori, confessori, missionari*, Turin, Einaudi, 1996, pp. 284 onward.

63 Cf. D. Zardin, *Carlo Borromeo. Cultura, santità, governo*, Milan, Vita e Pensiero, 2010, in particular chapter iv.

64 Comprising Acqui, Alba, Alessandria, Asti, Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, Ivrea, Lodi, Mondovì, Novara, Savona, Tortona, Ventimiglia, Vercelli and then Vigevano: F. Somaini, *La chiesa ambrosiana e l'eredità sforzesca*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 20 ff.

at least in part, occurred in Cremona which from the beginning of the sixteenth century was located on the border with Venetian territories. A trading town and thoroughfare on the plains of the Po, as we have previously mentioned, reformists were present there from the early sixteenth century and Calvinist circles remained active there as late as the 1570s. For almost two hundred years Cremona's Jewish community was very active in printing.⁶⁵ Restriction began to be placed on Jewish citizens in the time of Paul IV with his order to burn copies of the Talmud (1559). Church and state realized that they had a common interest in extinguishing all forms of dissent: Borromeo gained the support of Niccolò Sfondrati and Cesare Speciano who applied the Milanese model, again giving rise to great resistance from the local *élite*. Central backing allowed for an ecclesiastical restructuring based on the Milanese model with urban and rural parsonages, seminaries, female monasteries, the introduction of the new Tridentine religious orders, and so on. In Cremona too the same factors combined: efficiency, education, firm-handed charity, and the use of the inquisition and censorship against any form of dissidence from 'heretics' to Jewish citizens—with a progressive erosion of concessions towards the latter up to the point of their expulsion in 1597.

Borromeo managed to intervene successfully in the subsidiary dioceses outside the borders of the Milan, such as the Venetian towns of Bergamo and Brescia, both characterized by strong religious dissidence. In the Venetian territories, civil authority generally tended to subordinate ecclesiastical authority. However the Republic of Venice had not fulfilled 'hopes' of it becoming a *gateway into Italy* for the Reformation, explaining that the claims made against Rome did not signify any intention of breaking with the Papacy, which would have been a rather preposterous political choice in Italy at that time. In 1575 Borromeo was allowed to visit both Brescia and Bergamo, but this was not without tensions. In Brescia, Domenico Bollani was active: a reformer of exceptional fame and life, who was in continuous epistolary contact with Borromeo, despite his criticisms of the normative model in Milan. Things were more delicate in Bergamo. The bishop, Vittore Soranzo, came from the heterodox groups from the Venetian territories and further afield: under Paul IV he was classified and subjected to inquisition as a heretic. Soranzo was not convicted in the end because of being a Venetian: however he did have to leave his diocese in 1557 retiring, indeed, to Venice. After Soranzo, Federico Cornaro, who had been bishop of Verona, promised alignment with the Tridentine decrees, as a result of his close ties with Borromeo. Borromeo's excursions outside the

65 The press of Vincenzo Conti.

ecclesiastical province of Milan to the areas of Como by then under the confederacy or the Grisons have been covered elsewhere in this essay.

As a final point, it is interesting to note that the least effective interventions made by Borromeo were in the dioceses of Vigevano and of Pavia, cities linked to the politics of the Sforza family: Vigevano in particular where in the mid sixteenth century there was the unusual situation of Spanish bishops. Borromeo visited Vigevano in 1578; with regard to Pavia, in the time of bishop Ippolito De' Rossi, the adoption of the Milanese model was certainly helped by the presence of Barnabites and by the short-lived government of Alessandro Sauli, a role model within the Tridentine church, a Barnabite himself.⁶⁶ It is very clear to see why, following the death of Borromeo, the provincial councils were gradually abandoned.⁶⁷

'After Carlo': A Difficult Succession

Borromeo left to his successors an important legacy, but one that was difficult to manage: he had succeeded where many had failed because he called many diverse elements into play, an unyielding life, pastoral intuition, the social impact of his family name, in Milan and in Rome; a synthesis that was difficult to recreate.⁶⁸ On his death, the Milanese diocese and society celebrated his *sanctity*—he became a saint in 1610—⁶⁹ however every resistance to reforms strengthened. Who could have been able to substitute him? Thoughts turned to his cousin Federico. Carlo had sent him to study in Bologna, not to study law but to study theology. Through his contact with the Jesuits, he had considered joining them. Federico was immediately recalled to Milan and finished his studies in Pavia. On the death of his cousin, Federico was little more than twenty years old and not expert enough to replace Carlo. The Borromeo family sent him to Rome, in the Curia, in order to speed up his career.

66 On Sauli the only recent, yet limited, study is *Visite pastorali in diocesi di Pavia nel Cinquecento: una documentazione guadagnata alla storia*, X. Toscani ed, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003.

67 For this part cf. the various volumes of the history of these diocese released in Brescia, La Scuola. For Brescia, C. Cairns, *Domenico Bollani Bishop of Brescia. Devotion to Church and State in the Republic of Venice in the Sixteenth Century*, Nieuwkoop, De Graaf, 1976 (Italian edition. Brescia, Marietti, 2007). For Bergamo: M. Firpo, *Vittore Soranzo vescovo ed eretico. Riforma della Chiesa Inquisizione nell'Italia del Cinquecento*, Bari, Laterza, 2006.

68 C. di Filippo Bareggi, *Carlo Borromeo: modello ideale o uomo di governo?* In *L'Italia delle cento città. Dalla dominazione spagnola all'Unità nazionale*, M.L. Cicalese and A. Musi eds., Milan, Franco Angeli, 2006, pp. 189–205.

69 A. Turchini, *La fabbrica di un santo: il processo di canonizzazione di Carlo Borromeo e la Controriforma*, Casale Monferrato, Marietti, 1984.

Gaspare Visconti was, in the meantime, called to the archbishopric of Milan. Of the same age as Carlo and previously bishop of Novara, Visconti followed the guidelines laid down by his predecessor for nine years full of difficulty: disliked by Madrid, without the level of power of his predecessor, he had to take on all the opposing forces that were silenced by the strength of Carlo's charisma as well as all the criticisms from Carlo's closest collaborators.

In Rome, Federico stood out for his passion for antiques, his erudition, his evident political alignment with the Spanish, and his profound spirituality. He was very close to Filippo Neri and to the Roman Oratory, and it was Neri who convinced him, in 1595, to accept the position of archbishop of Milan. Federico believed himself to be more inclined to study and to contemplation and believed the position in Milan to be too onerous, not least because of the memory of his important cousin. He eventually took the see of the Milanese archdiocese in 1595 and his governance was to last for thirty six years.

Federico, The 'Second' Borromeo

Federico set himself the goal of following his cousin Carlo's example; however his style was very different. The similarities were: unanimous management of the diocese, frequent recourse to provincial synods and councils, care given to seminaries and pastoral visits. The religious tension was also the same, the life of prayer, the attention toward charity. Federico, however, wanted to dedicate himself to study and to reflection. He was very much attracted to mysticism, and was in touch with various nuns directly. He visited them, and with some he entered into epistolary dialogue, turning them into the protagonists of some of his writings.⁷⁰ Federico's cultural training had taken place in a less dramatic time than that of his cousin: spiritually Federico possessed a serene and mild *imprinting* from Filippo Neri. He was happy to stop and contemplate nature, the *meadow flowers* [...] *marvelously beautiful* as were *serene nights, glowing with the brightness of the stars* [...] *that hold so much that is divine*: and he did this in the company of women, even cloistered nuns, and was not in the least scared by this habit. He was envious of cloistered life and that interior *calm* that had spoken to his own *quietism*, as he appears in the *Ragionamenti spirituali* addressed to the nuns of Santa Marta.⁷¹ His voluminous *Sacri ragionamenti*

70 Such as the *Viaggi solitari, o vero Trattati sopra la vita solitaria*: C. di Filippo Bareggi, *Monache, mistiche, sante: Federico Borromeo e le claustrali del suo tempo*, "Studia Borromaica", 17 (2003), pp. 181–202 (citation p. 197).

71 F. Molinari, *Federico Borromeo (1564–1631) e il quietismo*, Naples, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1982. Perhaps for this reason he was not beatified.

are also very interesting: a collection of speeches held on various occasions that reveal the lowering of the reforming tensions held by his cousin and an adhesion to the Council of Trent that was more conservative and restorative, most of all in respect of the division between the lay and the clergy.

He felt great discomfort in the responsibilities of government. In his defense of ecclesiastical jurisdiction he echoed his cousin. However, Carlo had managed to separate political problems from pastoral ones in favour of the latter, whereas Federico's rigidity and the continued conflict with the governor Velasco, combined with a Spain that was obsessed by ongoing wars, divided the diocese into factions thus almost paralyzing it. In 1597, Federico went to Rome in order to seek an agreement with Phillip II, and remained there until 1601, when Phillip III sent Pietro de Azevedo, the Count of Fuentes, to Milan as governor, under instruction to agree peace. After Fuentes' death, tensions were contained by a *Concordia giurisdizionale fra il foro ecclesiastico ed il foro secolare* that was difficult to apply: it was only the plague of 1629–32 that put an end to it. A very long period full of difficulties followed, including pastoral difficulties, which was marked by huge legal expenses that weighed down on a diocese already beleaguered by the consequences of the Thirty years War.

Federico was a *Christian philosopher*, as he loved to describe himself: a humanist expression, indeed a neo-platonic one, which well signaled the quenching of the reforming tensions of the previous century, and sees the seventeenth century reaction to Tridentine censorship emerge in the form of flight towards the supernatural and the mystic,⁷² and to the demonic, including burning at the stake.⁷³ Federico's immense and expensive undertaking saw him lavish money in a way that was less like a patron and more like a constructor of a new high-level Catholic culture. Following extensive research in libraries in the Italian peninsula, Europe, Greece, and the Near East, Federico amassed thousands of printed works and extremely precious codices from a plethora of sources: Hebrew, Greek, Roman, patristic writing, Arabic, Syrian, Ethiopian, Persian, that formed the core of the Ambrosian library. Destined to become a laboratory for the redemption of a Catholic culture that had been in crisis in the previous century,⁷⁴ in 1609 it was opened to the public, the second only to do so in Europe following the Bodleian library (1602). In 1618 the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana was founded, constructed around the personal

72 His relations with Caterina Vannini are very important (P. Misciatelli, *Caterina Vannini. Una cortigiana convertita senese e il card. Federico Borromeo alla luce di un epistolario*, Milan, 1932; A. Saba, *Federico Borromeo e i mistici del suo tempo*, Milan, 1933.

73 Nine in 32 years.

74 It was flanked with a trilingual college and a printing house with precious oriental characters.

collection of Borromeo that he had continued to enrich up until the plague of 1630 that convinced him to become more moderate.

An intellectual and a mystic more than a pastor and a jurist, Federico was also a seventeenth century *principe* in the full sense as his rich correspondence demonstrates: this needs to be further explored in order to better understand a character and a period in history that was multifaceted, suspended between an elitist culture and illiteracy, splendour and misery, the flaunting of privilege and unprejudiced representations of poverty, orderly consensus and deviance, strict cloistering and mystic flight. Difficult contradictions to understand, but that can provide the key to an accurate reading of Milan, and not only Milan, in the seventeenth century.⁷⁵

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75 Always held in the Ambrosiana library in Milan. On the second Borromeo cf. the conferences proceedings from 2000 and 2001 in "Studia Borromaica", 15 (2001) e 16 (2002).

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The Economy of Renaissance Milan

Patrizia Mainoni

The multiplicity of environmental conditions in the Lombard region is unmatched elsewhere in the Italian peninsula. To the zone of foothills and mountains with wide valleys, and the plain crossed by numerous waterways, correspond cities with different characteristics. Despite their inclusion in the Visconti state, urban centres with a strong communal tradition continued to be the fulcrum of trade, of production, of financial dealings. The image of Visconti and Sforza Milan as a “factory-city” proposed by Carlo Maria Cipolla has been extended by Luciana Frangioni to the entire Lombard region, a “factory-region”; it has even been suggested that the structure of manufacturing resembled that of today.¹ It is, therefore, the industrial rather than mercantile physiognomy of Visconti and Sforza Lombardy, and the diffusion of manufacturing in the territory, that have been stressed. Nevertheless, production outside the cities, although attested for the communal era, has been studied only from the 1990s because previously, as for later medieval Florence, only city workshops had been examined.² Commerce, on the other hand, because of the predominance of Tuscan trade (in the historiography as well), has received more limited attention, except for research on the routes taken by trade goods and merchants to the Alps and to the Mediterranean.³ The

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- 1 Luciana Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade. Costi di trasporto e vie di comunicazioni dei prodotti milanesi alla fine del Trecento* (Bologna, 1982); Luciana Frangioni, La politica economica del dominio di Milano nei secoli XV–XVI, *Nuova Rivista Storica* LXXI (1987), pp. 253–268; Bruno Dini, L'evoluzione del commercio e della banca nelle città dell'Italia centro-settentrionale dal 1350 al 1450, in *Italia 1350–1450: tra crisi, trasformazione, sviluppo*, Centro Italiano di studi di storia e d'arte (Pistoia 1993), pp. 145–170, p. 149.
 - 2 Patrizia Mainoni, *Economia e politica nella Lombardia medievale. Da Bergamo a Milano fra XIII e XV secolo* (Cavallermaggiore 1994); Patrizia Mainoni, L'economia di Bergamo tra XIII e XV secolo, in *Storia economica e sociale di Bergamo. I primi millenni*, II, *Il comune e la signoria*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini, Fondazione per la Storia Economica e Sociale di Bergamo (Bergamo 1999), pp. 257–337; Stephan R. Epstein, *Freedom and Growth. The rise of states and markets in Europe, 1300–1750* (London 2000); Vittorio Beonio Brocchieri, “Piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo”: famiglie e mestieri nel Ducato di Milano in età spagnola (Milan 2000).
 - 3 Gigliola Soldi Rondinini, Le vie transalpine del commercio milanese da sec. XIII al XV, *Felix olim Lombardia*. Studi di storia padana dedicati dagli allievi a Giuseppe Martini (Milan, 1978),

attitude of the Visconti and Sforza *signori* towards commerce and production in Milan (but not other cities), however, has been investigated several times, and has not yet been fully understood. Historians in the 1930s to the 1960s argued that there had been constant support from the *signori* for merchants and manufactures.⁴ In the last thirty years, partly through comparisons with other regional states in Italy, more attention has been paid to political factors and economic trends, putting into perspective the continuity of policies favourable to merchants. Besides, there is general agreement on the part of historians on the fact that the formation of the regional states of Milan, Florence, Venice and Naples boosted competitiveness and the draining of resources and manpower towards the capital cities. As regards the Lombardy of the Visconti and the Sforza, it is recognized that the enduring urban polycentrism limited the capacity of state intervention and that therefore the subject cities continued to maintain their own spaces of economic autonomy.⁵

The formation of the dominion coincided with the troubled period of the end of independent civic governments, the second half of the fourteenth century with a succession of epidemics and of wars between the states. The polarization of trade in favour of Milan signified the contraction of the commerce of the other cities. At Pavia, Cremona, and above all at Piacenza, trade, that had been the pivotal economic activity in the communal epoch, suffered a marked contraction from the fourteenth century, because of the successes of Milanese merchants and the competition of Tuscan merchants on the routes of the Po valley.⁶ But this is not to say that entrepreneurial interests were abandoned; they gradually shifted towards agricultural production. At Bergamo, which still

pp. 343–484; Luciana Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade. Costi di trasporto e vie di comunicazione dei prodotti milanesi alla fine del Trecento* (Bologna 1982); Patrizia Mainoni, *Mercanti lombardi fra Barcellona e Valenza nel basso medioevo* (Bologna 1982).

4 Gino Barbieri, *Economia e politica nel ducato di Milano (1386–1535)* (Milan 1938); Tommaso Zerbi, *La banca nell'ordinamento finanziario visconteo* (Como 1935); Carlo Maria Cipolla, I precedenti economici, *Storia di Milano* della Fondazione Treccani Degli Alfieri, VIII (Milan 1958) pp. 335–385; Gino Barbieri, *Origini del capitalismo lombardo* (Milan 1961).

5 Franco Franceschi and Luca Molà, Regional states and economic development, *The Italian Renaissance State*, eds. Andrea Gamberini and Isabella Lazzarini (Cambridge 2012), pp. 444–466; Mainoni, *Economia e politica*; Epstein, *Freedom and Growth*.

6 Dini, L'evoluzione del commercio, 165–168; Patrizia Mainoni, “Cremona l'altalena quondam potentissima”. Economia e finanza pubblica nei secoli XIII–XIV, *Storia di Cremona. Il Trecento. Chiesa e cultura (VIII–XIV secolo)*, eds. Giancarlo Andenna and Giorgio Chittolini (Cremona, 2007), pp. 318–373; Pierre Racine, Il declino della mercatura piacentina (dagli orizzonti internazionali a quelli regionali), in *Storia di Piacenza*, III, *Dalla signoria viscontea al principato farnesiano (1313–1545)* (Piacenza 1997) pp. 223–254.

retained a strong manufacturing capacity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, inclusion in the dominion of the Visconti blocked the attempt at commercial co-ordination imposed by the city and precipitated a civil war in the district which was ended only by the Venetian conquest (1428). Here, as at Brescia, the connection between commercial interests and political leanings facilitated adhesion to Venice. The city-states' loss of government over their own *contadi*, heavy taxation, which no longer benefited the areas in which it was raised, the shifting of trade routes and a decline in population combined to aggravate the crisis of Lombard cities in the Visconti Trecento. At the end of the fifteenth century, on the other hand, Milan was a rich city, full of workshops and luxury goods.⁷ A century earlier, judging by the demand for consumer goods, the standard of living of the aristocracy in Milan was decidedly inferior to that of Florence.⁸ The expansion of spending power as expressed in sumptuous clothes, elegant residences and furnishings, a wide variety of food-stuffs, became evident in the course of the fifteenth century and seemed to accelerate in the second half, matching, perhaps with some delay, that in other great Renaissance cities. This essay will trace the evolution of the Lombard economy from the mid-fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries, from a commerce partly dependent on intermediaries to merchants thinking on a European scale.

The Land

The plurality of landscapes and the diverse distribution of population determined the structure of agriculture. Up until the end of the fifteenth century the land was in large part divided among many owners, despite the presence of large proprietors such as churches and monasteries. In the intensively cultivated northern region, cereals—rye, millet, wheat—were the main crops. Inadequate agricultural yields forced many small proprietors to sell and many peasants to come to the city to look for work. Lands also changed hands as a

7 Sources in: Carlo Maria Cipolla, I precedenti economici, *Storia di Milano* della Fondazione Treccani Degli Alfieri, VIII, Milan 1958, pp. 335–385; Patrizia Mainoni, L'attività mercantile e le casate milanesi nel secondo Quattrocento, *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro* (Milan 1983), 2 vols, II, pp. 575–584.

8 Luciana Frangioni, *Milano fine Trecento. Il carteggio milanese dell'Archivio Datini di Prato* (Florence 1994), 2 vols, I, p. 7; Philippe Braunstein, La geografia della produzione, *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa*, III, *Produzione e tecniche*, ed. Philippe Braunstein and Luca Molà (Treviso 2007), pp. 3–34, pp. 28–9.

consequence of credit transactions, for which they had been used as security. If the interest was not paid or the loan not redeemed, the land became the property of the creditors, who were not just merchants and financiers, but whoever had money to invest. The well-watered plain, sparsely populated before the fourteenth century, underwent a radical process of transformation. The investments that characterized the trading and productive economy in the age of the Visconti and Sforza were also put into agriculture in the most fertile areas of the plain between the Ticino and the Adda. From the first decades of the fourteenth century there took place a process of concentration of ownership, marked by the appearance of new sharecropping contracts, short term, for larger agricultural complexes, with arable, vines and meadowland. The conditions of the leases were onerous and called for the labour of the whole peasant family. Productivity, because of the obligation to make improvements, was potentially greater, but was obtained without a contribution from the proprietors, in contrast to the Tuscan *mezzadria*.⁹ In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the excavation of channels and canals for irrigation intensified, permitting a notable extension of forage crops. The enormous quantities of hay served to feed herds of cattle and flocks of sheep that came down to overwinter in valleys of the Alps and the foothills. The integration between agriculture and livestock rearing, which constituted one of the most significant characteristics of the fifteenth-century Lombard countryside, was intensified in the second half of the century thanks to investments by the tenants of ecclesiastical institutions and gentlemen from the cities. Cattle raising and the production of cheese in the lower Po valley was entrusted to specialists in livestock, the “bergamaschi”. At the end of the fifteenth century the agriculture of the irrigated plain was technically very advanced, with large, compact farms and, thanks to crops intended for the market, quite profitable.¹⁰ The new readiness to invest capital in the land was well represented by the costly experiment with the cultivation of rice, destined from the late sixteenth century to be widely diffused, while the cultivation of mulberries to raise silkworms was introduced very gradually from the Veneto into Lombardy.

9 Luisa Chiappa Mauri, *Terra e uomini nella Lombardia medievale* (Rome, 1997).

10 Giorgio Chittolini, *Avvicendamento e paesaggio agrario nella pianura irrigua lombarda (secoli xv–xvi), Agricoltura e trasformazioni dell'ambiente, secoli XIII–XVIII*, ed. Ada Guarducci (Florence 1984), pp. 554–566; Enrico Roveda, *Uomini, terre e acque: studi sull'agricoltura della “Bassa lombarda” tra xv–xvii secolo* (Milan 2012).

Commerce

The reconfiguration of the commercial geography with the formation of the Visconti state calls for a backward glance to take account of the plurality of situations that contributed to defining the relation of the Lombard cities to Milan. In the first half of the fourteenth century the shifting of the axes of European exchange, with the reduction in journeys to the Levant counterbalanced by new western routes, put Lombardy in a strategic position, in that the itinerary of the “via Francigena” towards the fairs of Champagne, across the Mont Cenis, the Great Saint Bernard pass and eastern France, rapidly declined, moving the land routes further east to cross German lands in the direction of Paris and Bruges.¹¹ By sea, new markets and new financial opportunities were opened up in the Iberian peninsula to Italians from the cities of the interior, Tuscans, Piacentines, “Lombards”. The merchants of the cities which were part of the Visconti state did not, however, share the same background. In the communal era the principal route axis of the Lombard-Veneto region was constituted by the Po and its tributaries, the Ticino and the Adda, with ports at Pavia, Piacenza and Cremona and the outlet at Venice. But the course of the river passed through a multiplicity of competing dominions. Piacenza was the principal transit node, in that it was there that the Po was usually crossed. Cremona, at least in the thirteenth century, acted as the port for the cities of eastern Lombardy and of Emilia, Bergamo, probably also Brescia and Parma.¹² The route of the Po and its tributaries was the preferred itinerary not for luxury goods, whose importance was quantitatively limited and which took the route that was most secure at the time, but for the enormous volume of heavy foodstuffs of mass consumption. Como and the northern area of the diocese of Milan were connected instead to the routes which, through the Alps and what is now Switzerland, reached the middle Rhine. A series of agreements concluded from about 1270 to 1370 with the powers that controlled access through the Simplon, Gothard, Splügen and Septimer passes, assured protection for Milanese merchants. Towards the middle of the fourteenth century the Visconti imposed direct control over the valleys to the south of the Gothard pass, whose importance was increasing not just for the route towards Burgundy

11 Patrizia Mainoni, La fisionomia economica delle città lombarde dalla fine del Duecento alla prima metà del Trecento. Materiali per un confronto, in *Le città del Mediterraneo all'Apogeo dello sviluppo Medievale: Aspetti economici e sociali* (Pistoia 2003), pp. 141–221; Peter Spufford, Trade in fourteenth-century Europe, *The Oxford Economic History* (Cambridge 2000), pp. 156–208, p. 157, pp. 182–183; Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade*.

12 Mainoni, *Economia e politica*, pp. 185ff.; Mainoni, Cremona, p. 323.

and Flanders, because of the development of the cities of southern Germany. From the fifteenth century, however, the aggression of the Swiss Confederation rendered the roads less secure.¹³

The need to make use of foreign carriers shaped the relation of the merchants of the Po valley cities to the ports of Venice, Genoa and Savona. The Venetian and Ligurian options were not mutually exclusive because, from the fourteenth century, the circuits of trade had become diversified. The relations of the Lombard cities with Venice were complicated in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries as Venetian merchants attempted commercial penetration along the axis of the Po, imposing a monopoly of the sale of salt on the entire region and restrictions on trade. The Lombard communes came to terms individually with Venice. The clash of Venice with Milan was evident in the treaty of 1317. Milan had to abrogate the tolls imposed on the Venetians and reimburse those already paid, and above all had to buy salt exclusively from Venice. In 1339, having restored good relations with the republic, the Visconti positioned themselves as mediators between the cities which had become part of their state and Venice to establish new commercial conditions. In 1349, at the peak of a phase of expansion, Luchino and Giovanni Visconti concluded a treaty favourable to themselves: the major business of the importation of salt was to be completely controlled by Milan, which would distribute it to the other cities.¹⁴ The two "pacta" with Venice remained the basis for commercial relations between Milan and its most important maritime outlet until at least the second half of the fifteenth century.

The inclusion of Cremona and Piacenza in the *signoria* had secured the elimination of the frequent hostilities that had obstructed traffic on the Po during the previous century. Lodi was the port where waterborne goods that arrived from Venice for Milan were unloaded. The merchants of the other cities of the Po valley seem to have been excluded from the transalpine routes now dominated by the Milanese. In two hundred items registered at the toll station of Saint-Jean-de-Losne between 1340 and 1341, Milanese were in the great majority, and merchants from Como, Venice and Bologna were also mentioned, but none from Cremona or Pavia. Only the Piacentines maintained a

13 Soldi Rondinini, *Le vie transalpine*; Patrizia Mainoni, *Attraverso i valichi svizzeri: merci oltramontane e mercati lombardi (secoli XIII–XV)*, *Le Alpi medievali nello sviluppo delle regioni contermini*, ed. Gian Maria Varanini (Naples 2004), pp. 99–122; Spufford, *Trade*, pp. 198ff.

14 Mainoni, *Economia e politica*, pp. 187–188; *I patti con Brescia, 1252–1339*, ed. Luca Sandini (Venice 1991), p. 92; Antonio Noto, *Liber datii mercantie communis Mediolani. Registro del secolo XV* (Milano 1950), n. 58, pp. 126–146.

mercantile presence outside Italy, but on a much reduced scale compared to the communal era.

In the 1340s the Visconti modified the statutory norms of the cities in their state to make the customs of commercial law homogeneous. More incisive still was their policy for the roads, which redrew the itineraries within their dominion, with the aim of making them converge on Milan and assuring that that city was the economic centre, bringing to it the flow of goods and the most prized raw materials that came from Provence and Flanders. In 1341, 1343 and 1344 Luchino and Giovanni Visconti granted customs concessions to Florentine merchants so that they would stop at Milan and at Como on their way to Florence, Pisa, the Romagna, Venice and the Marche. Now the Florentines preferred to go via Bologna, where the taffeta most in demand was produced. The customs concessions, therefore, encouraged the transit through Milan of what had become the most considerable trading in Europe at that time. In 1346 and 1347 two general decrees were issued, called the *Provisiones Ianue*, which extended the preceding tax regime to all merchants and expanded the range of goods. A comprehensive toll was fixed for goods coming to or from Genoa if they took the route through Cremona, Lodi and Pizzighettone. The itinerary promoted the role of Cremona as a pivot of communications between central and eastern Italy and Milan, while Piacenza had lost the centrality of its position, given the polarisation of the trade of central Italy in favour of Florence.¹⁵ The interventions of Giovanni and Luchino Visconti, therefore, facilitated international transits through Milan, making the fiscal burdens within the territory of the dominion more uniform and lighter. The very numerous provisions concerning tolls and commerce issued in Milan between 1330 and 1350, on which all the structure of tolls in the state rested well beyond the end of Sforza era, confirmed in this period the identification of the lords with the interests of the merchants of Milan.

In the era of the Visconti and the Sforza, business structures, with few exceptions, remained modest as organizations, based on families, and in their capital. As on the other side of the Alps, on the most frequented itineraries some innkeepers (the “osti”) played a fundamental role, organizing the merchants’ correspondance, receiving goods in transit and operating as commission

15 Sources: Louis Gauthier, *Les Lombards dans les Deux-Bourgognes* (Paris 1907), pp. 211–213; Luigi Gaddi, Per la storia della legislazione delle istituzioni mercantili lombarde, *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, x, yr. XI (1893), pp. 266–321, p. 290 (1341), and pp. 292–294 (1344), p. 280 (1277); Noto, *Liber datii*, nos. 58–66, pp. 70–73, nos. 75–96, pp. 75–81. Mainoni, “Cremona”, p. 334; Luciana Frangioni, “Cremona terra di boni merchatanti”, *Storia di Cremona*, III, pp. 374–393.

agents. In the second half of the fourteenth century Avignon, the residence of the popes, was reached by road, the “cammino di Vigliana”, as well as by sea.¹⁶ At Venice there were numerous correspondents, from Milan, Monza and Tuscany, among whom, in the first half of the fifteenth century, stood out Arrighino Panigarola, an isolated case of a Milanese “cambista” (money-changer), and the Sienese Cecco di Tommaso, who had representatives at Barcelona, Valencia, Venice, Milan and Cremona. The centres situated on the route from Milan to Genoa, Alessandria, Tortona and Voghera, functioned as intermediaries. Milanese exports from Genoa relied on merchants from Genoa and what is now Piedmont, but also on Milanese and Tuscan firms.¹⁷ The recurring political fragility of Genoa allowed the repeated attempts of the lords of Milan, from the mid-fourteenth century to Francesco Sforza, to conquer the great Ligurian marketplace.

In the late fourteenth century, the international fairs at Geneva, on the Rhône, which were controlled by the dukes of Savoy, assumed new importance; there, Milanese and Lombard merchants were in the majority, above all in the first half of the fifteenth century. The Milanese maintained a strong position there, even when the Tuscans, with the Medici company, surpassed them. Although the fairs at Lyon competed successfully against those at Geneva in the second half of the fifteenth century, the Milanese were the last, with the Beaqua, the Panigarola and the Lampugnani, to transfer their representatives.¹⁸ Apart from the major commercial routes and the transalpine markets such as Bruges, the merchants made use of a network of minor fairs and big weekly markets. The number and economic importance of the Lombard fairs grew in the course of the fifteenth century, because the peddlers and small traders went there personally to sell their products, and in the fairs of the foothills of the Alps were concentrated the markets for horses and cattle raised in the mountains.¹⁹

16 Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade*, pp. 72–84; Frangioni, *Milano fine Trecento*, I, pp. 101–108; Stefania Duvia, *Restati eran Thodeschi in su l'hospicio. Il ruolo degli osti in una città di confine (Como), secoli XV–XVI* (Milan 2010).

17 Reinhold C. Mueller, *The Venetian Money Market. Banks, Panics and the Public Debt (1200–1500)* (Baltimore–London 1997), p. 275; Mainoni, *Mercanti lombardi*, pp. 35ff.; Barbieri, *Origini*, pp. 379ff.; Sergio Tognetti, “Fra li compagni palesi et li ladri occulti”. Banchieri senesi del Quattrocento, *Nuova Rivista Storica*, LXXXVIII (2004), pp. 27–101; Beatrice Del Bo, *Banca e politica a Milano a metà Quattrocento* (Rome 2010), pp. 58–59.

18 Giovanna Petti Balbi, Le nationes italiane all'estero, in *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa*, IV, pp. 397–424, pp. 413–414.

19 Peter Stabel, Italian merchants and the fairs in the Low Countries (12th–16th centuries), *La pratica dello scambio. Sistemi di fiere, mercanti e città in Europa (1400–1700)*, ed. Paola

At the end of the fourteenth century, some Milanese and Lombard firms began to send their own agents and partners to Barcelona and to Valencia, to acquire the wool “di San Matteo” (of Saint Matthew), which was badly wanted for textile manufactures. Milanese merchant houses were already active at Bruges, but the most significant phenomenon was the establishment in the markets of Barcelona and Valencia of middling merchants as well. An aspect of trade in the direction of Genoa and Catalonia that was not of secondary importance was the imposing development of exports of a plant used in dyeing, woad, which often formed the outward load towards Barcelona and Valencia. The trade in woad was transformed by Duke Filippo Maria Visconti into a state monopoly, whose export licence (*tratta*) provided a substantial source of income, which grew until the middle of the fifteenth century.²⁰

The period between the end of the fourteenth century and the first decades of the fifteenth saw the greatest extension of Lombard maritime commerce, even if Milanese merchants continued to frequent the Iberian region in the second half of the fifteenth century and in the sixteenth. The Lombards, compared to the merchant communities dominated by the Tuscans, remained in a restricted position, because they limited themselves to the export of their products, although these were the ones in most request in Iberian markets. In their turn, Tuscan firms active in Milan sent Milanese and Cremonese fustians, iron and brass goods from Milan, hats and caps from Monza, to the markets of Provence and Catalonia, giving rise to a substantial business documented in the Datini archive.²¹ The opening of the Catalan and Provençal markets to the Florentines, and then to the Milanese, brought with it, therefore, a clear growth in external demand for Lombard manufactures.

In the reign of Filippo Maria Visconti (1412–1447) the interests of merchants were once again recognized as the motor of the state's economy. It could be described as protomercantilism, in the sense of state intervention in the

Lanaro (Venice 2003), pp. 131–160; Stephan A. Epstein, Regional fairs, institutional innovation and economic growth in late medieval Europe, *The Economic History Review* LVII, 3 (1994), pp. 459–482; Epstein, *Freedom and Growth*, chap. 4; Mainoni, *Attraverso i valichi svizzeri*, pp. 113–118.

20 Gerolamo Biscaro, Il banco Filippo Borromei e compagni di Londra (1436–1439), *Archivio Storico Lombardo* XL (1913) pp. 37–126, 283–385; Mainoni, *Economia e politica*, pp. 121–124; Peter Stabel, Italian merchants, p. 144; Italo Cammarata, *Oro blu: storia e geografia del gualdo di qua dal Po* (Voghera 2001).

21 Mainoni, *Mercanti lombardi*, pp. 20–29; Frangioni, La politica economica, p. 257; Frangioni, *Milano fine Trecento*; Concepción Villanueva Morte, La empresa familiar de los “Litta”: negocios e intereses entre Milán y España desde mediados del siglo xv, *Edad Media. Revista de historia* 10 (2009), pp. 307–341.

economy and the centrality of merchants in economic processes. For Milan the promotion of mercantile interests followed immediately on the new duke's taking power, and various decrees were quickly issued, aimed at safeguarding the imports of raw materials and forbidding the sale of woollen cloth not produced in the dominion, except for highly-priced products. These provisions have been interpreted as a sign of crisis in the Lombard woollen industry, in contradiction of the fact that it was expanding. An alliance with Genoa was stipulated in 1427, which was followed by the *signoria* over the city, lasting until 1435. In 1430 extremely favourable commercial agreements were made, such that they were immediately revoked when Genoa rebelled against Milanese dominion. The recovery of Genoese autonomy was accompanied by an alliance with Alfonso the Magnanimous, King of Aragon. This period corresponded to what has been defined as the "golden age" of Genoese commerce in England and Flanders: between 1421 and 1458, Genoa obtained privileged conditions in traffic with England, such that some Lombard merchants active in London found it convenient to describe themselves as "Genoese". Furthermore, the dominion over Genoa, when the Mediterranean interests of Florentine merchants were becoming more evident after the conquest of Pisa, Livorno and Porto Pisano, placed Visconti subjects, if only for a few years, in a strong position on the western routes leading to the Ligurian ports, even compared to the Genoese themselves.²² The war started by Venice in 1426, if it helps to explain this development, does not seem to have brought a longlasting commercial blockade, because of the prolonged periods of truce, for one thing. Under Filippo Maria, in 1439, there was also a decisive improvement in the navigability of the canal that linked Milan with the Ticino, the Naviglio Grande, which became the principal means of transport of heavy goods for the city. The excavation of a second navigable canal, the Martesana, was carried out under the Sforza.²³

At the end of the fourteenth century, some Tuscan merchant houses established themselves permanently in Milan, bringing financial capacity and a network of correspondents and branches that gave new dimensions to commerce. The most important was that of Giovanni Borromeo, who was originally from

22 Gaddi, *Per la storia*, p.619, p.623; Mainoni, *Mercanti lombardi*, pp. 39–40; Silvana Fossati Raiteri, *Stati, mercanti e trattati: Genova e la tarda dominazione dei Visconti*, *Nuova Rivista Storica* LXXXVIII (2004), pp. 737–758; Enrico Basso, *Insedimenti e commercio nel Mediterraneo bassomedievale. I mercanti genovesi dal Mar Nero all'Atlantico* (Turin 2008), p. 116.

23 Giuliana Fantoni, *L'acqua a Milano. Uso e gestione nel basso medioevo (1385–1535)* (Boulogne 1990), pp. 34–39.

San Miniato. The merchant and banking firm of the Borromeo became particularly important, above all during the dukedom of Filippo Maria, because the bank was linked to the many networks and branches of the Borromeo “partners” in Italy and northern Europe. Giovanni’s nephew Vitaliano managed the general state treasury from 1418 to around 1430. In 1431 the branches in Bruges and London were opened, followed by those of Barcelona, in 1436/7, and Valencia, after the alliance with the duke of Milan, when Alfonso the Magnanimous probably offered Vitaliano very favourable conditions.²⁴

Duke Filippo Maria’s death, leaving no heirs, in 1447, the breaking-up of the state, the end of the republican experiment, the war and the conquest of Francesco Sforza, precipitated Milanese trade into a recession. The promoters of the change of regime were some of the major Milanese banker-merchants, Paolo Lampugnani, Galeotto Toscani, Antonio Moroni, Arrighino Panigarola. The failure of the company of Cecco di Tommaso, around 1449, and the grave difficulties of the Panigarola brothers, disrupted the working of the Milanese credit market, given that many Milanese and Lombard firms had invested in the firms with branches in Venice.²⁵

In the second half of the fifteenth century the growth of demand for luxury products in court society, the prolonged period of peace, the new markets opened in southern Italy by the alliance of Duke Francesco Sforza with Florence and the kingdom of Naples, the activity of Milanese companies at Bruges and the fairs of Geneva and Lyon, acted as an incentive for economic recovery. The papal court at Rome had become a promising market. Francesco Sforza’s support for Ferrante d’Aragona was repaid by enfeoffment with Bari. The importance of the fief of Bari, held for nearly a century, went well beyond the grant of revenue. The cities of the Puglian coast were the gathering points for the wool of the Dogana delle Pecore, providing Lombard exporters (like the Italian wool trade in general) with a new, interesting source of supply. The merchants under the Sforza received privileges throughout the whole kingdom of Naples, but at Bari the Milanese imported goods of various provenance, cloth from Bergamo and Verona, gold thread, signalling an extension of the ambit of their trade.²⁶

24 Biscaro, *Il banco*; Giorgio Chittolini, Borromeo Vitaliano, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 13 (Rome 1971), pp. 72–75; Mainoni, *Mercanti lombardi*, pp. 90–112.

25 Mueller, *The Venetian Money Market*, p. 274 and p. 335; Tognetti, “Fra li compagni palesi”; Del Bo, *Banca e politica*, p. 72, pp. 83–84.

26 John H. Munro, *I panni di lana*, in *Il Rinascimento italiano e l’Europa*, iv, *Commercio e cultura mercantile*, Vicenza 2007, pp. 105–142, p. 124; Raffaele Licinio, Bari aragonese e ducale, in *Storia di Bari. Dalla conquista normanna al ducato sforzesco* (Bari 1990), pp. 152–185;

One aspect that distinguishes the economy of northern Lombardy is the frequency and the continuity of exchanges with German merchants, from what is now Switzerland, and from the German cities. German lands were one of the most important outlets for fustians, and in their turn exported copper, silver and other metals, and linen cloth. The role of the Visconti as Imperial vicars and then dukes of the Empire guaranteed favourable treatment that was rarely interrupted. In the second half of the fourteenth century there were numerous Germans in Milan, representatives of the *Magna Societas Alamannorum* of Ravensburg and merchants from Nuremberg, Constance, Ulm, Basle, and Lucerne. In the fifteenth century the Germans apparently frequented Como above all, a marketplace which was a significant operating base, from a logistic perspective as well. In 1422, exploiting a moment of tension between Venice and the Empire, there was an attempt to shift the German trade from Venice to Milan, granting to the *communitas* of *theutonici mercatores* an ample privilege, which meant that Germans were treated the same as citizens in fiscal matters and gave them a one-third reduction in the tolls on the routes to Genoa and Tuscany. The privilege was confirmed by Francesco Sforza in 1450 and updated by Galeazzo Maria in 1469, remaining in force until the eighteenth century.²⁷ This favourable treatment was extended to merchants of the Swiss Confederation, that by then controlled the principal roads over the Alps to Lombardy. A magnificent opportunity was thus offered to German firms, who made use of it to push competing products, above all textiles, which would be a lasting problem. The great quantity of Rhenish florins circulating at Milan signalled the major purchases of silks, fustians, arms, gold thread, paid for in cash. The alliance of Ludovico il Moro with the emperor Maximilian in 1495 confirmed the strong position of the companies, after an attempt to suppress their privileges in 1493. The presence of the German companies showed how in some key sectors of the economy under the Sforza there were strong clashes of interests, because of the links between Milan and the states that constituted the outlets of trade, France with the fairs at Lyon, Bruges, the lands of the German empire. At the end of the fifteenth century Milan was an

Ettore Verga, *La Camera dei Mercanti di Milano nei secoli passati* (Milan 1914, reprinted Milan 1978), pp. 51–53; Mainoni, *L'attività mercantile*; Francesco Carabellese, *La Puglia nel secolo XV*, 2 vols (Bari 1901–1907), I, pp. 39–40.

27 Noto, *Liber datii*, pp. 1–6; Aloys Schulte, *Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Handels und Verkehers zwischen Westdeutschland und Italien, mit Ausschluss von Venedig*, 2 vols (Leipzig 1900); Patrizia Mainoni, *La nazione che non c'è. I tedeschi a Milano e a Como fra Tre e Quattrocento, Comunità forestiere e "nationes" nell'Europa dei secoli XII–XVI*, ed. Giovanna Petti Balbi (Naples 2002), pp. 201–228; Duvia, *Restati eran Thodeschi*.

international crossroads for trade and money in which the local operators were active in a financial and mercantile sphere that was much more integrated in the Italian and European context than in the mid-fourteenth century, and interacted with Florentine, Genoese and German firms that operated between Antwerp, Lyon, Milan and Venice.²⁸

Manufactures

Milan produced a considerable range of goods, which had no parallel in later medieval Italy, where exports were above all of textiles. The range of goods offered was due, apart from the size of the city, to the fact that much of the production took place in the *contado*, and was only co-ordinated and sold by merchants from the city. Woollen and mixed fibre cloths for export were produced in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, when “*lombardeschi*” textiles may have dominated the Italian cloth market. In the first half of the fourteenth century there developed a hierarchy of quality in favour of a few high-class products (Milan, Como for woollen cloth, Milan, Cremona for fustians) as against a massive production of middling (Milan, Monza, Pavia, Brescia) and low quality (Lecco, Bergamo). This differentiation in favour of Milan assured a lack of competition in the market and was established with the formation of the Visconti state. It was the corporation of Milanese merchants who established their own monopoly over the importation of English wool (“*lana francesca*”) through the control of the transalpine routes and the acquisition of trading licences from the king of France, documented from 1284 to 1343.²⁹ Nevertheless, if it has been possible for Florence, which is the model with which studies of this sector make comparisons, to calculate the number of pieces of cloth produced

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- 28 Hermann Kellenbenz, *Oberdeutschland und Mailand zur Zeit der Sforza*, in *Gli Sforza a Milano e in Lombardia e i loro rapporti con gli Stati italiani ed europei (1450–1535)*, Milan 1982, pp. 193–228; Mainoni, *La nazione*, pp. 210ff.; Patrizia Mainoni, *Alcune osservazioni sulla politica economica di Milano fra Ludovico il Moro e il dominio francese*, in *Milano e Luigi XII. Ricerche sul primo dominio francese in Lombardia (1499–1512)*, ed. Letizia Arcangeli (Milan 2002), pp. 341–368; Herman Van der Wee, *Structural changes in European long-distance trade and particularly in the re-export trade from south to north, 1350–1750, The Rise of Merchant Empires. Long-distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350–1750*, ed. John D. Tracy (Cambridge 1990); Stabel, *Italian merchants*.
- 29 Gaddi, *Per la storia*, pp. 284, 285, 291; Mainoni, *Economia e politica*, pp. 13–26; Epstein, *Freedom and Growth*, pp. 98–103; John H. Munro, *I panni di lana*, in *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa*, IV, *Commercio e cultura mercantile*, eds. Franco Franceschi, Richard A. Goldthwaite, Reinhold C. Mueller (Treviso 2007), pp. 105–142.

and hence the trend, for Lombardy the lack of data and the different system of production do not permit quantitative estimates, even if it is probable that production was lower but of better quality than in the thirteenth century. The membership of the corporation of “merchants who have fine wools worked” in Milan reached about 300 firms at the end of the fourteenth century, but registrations increased, above all in the second and third decades of the fifteenth century. The opening of the Iberian woollen market and the contraction of Florentine production, which reached its lowest level around 1414, happened at the same time and stimulated cloth production in all the Lombard cities. Even cities where previously the production of woollen cloth had been insignificant, such as Cremona, Pavia and Lodi, launched the production of cloth on a new basis. At Pavia the manufacture of woollen cloth replaced that of fustians, which had been the signature product in the communal era. In the cities of the Po valley the organization of the production of woollen cloth was guided by local merchants and governments.³⁰

The woollen industry of the small centre of Monza complemented, in the middling quality, that of Milan. Commercially semiautonomous in relation to the neighbouring city, it sold cloth to, and brought wool from, Milan and Venice. The productive capacity of Monza, including felt and hats, was very high: “little [wool] is being sold [in Milan] because Monza is not working”. Como was famed for high quality cloth, but in the Visconti and Sforza era it seemed rather to be noted for increasing manufacture of middling value cloth, as in neighbouring Torno and Perlasca.³¹ At Brescia the woollen industry was concentrated in city workshops, which towards the end of the fourteenth century used good imported wool, San Matteo, Provençal, but also English.³² For lower quality cloth, the most important area was the district of Bergamo.

30 Caterina Santoro, *La matricola dei mercanti di lana sottile di Milano*, Milan 1940, table 1; Laura Bertoni, *Pavia alla fine del Duecento. Una società urbana fra crescita e crisi* (Bologna 2013), pp. 170–175; Munro, *I panni di lana*, p. 122; Patrizia Mainoni, *Viglaebium opibus primum. Uno sviluppo economico nella Lombardia del Quattrocento*, in *Metamorfosi di un borgo. Vigevano in età visconteo-sforzesca*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini (Milan 1992), pp. 193–266; Patrizia Mainoni, *Le arti e l'economia urbana: mestieri, mercanti e manifatture a Cremona dal XIII al XV secolo*, in *Storia di Cremona. Il Quattrocento. Cremona nel Ducato di Milano (1395–1535)*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini (Cremona 2008), pp. 116–147.

31 Frangioni, *Milano fine Trecento*, 1, pp. 234–235; Paolo Grillo, “Vicus Lanificio Insignis”. Industria laniera e strutture sociali del borgo lariano di Torno nel XV, *Studi di storia medievale e di diplomazia*, 14, Como 1993, pp. 91–110.

32 Luciana Frangioni, *Brescia e i suoi acciai (fine sec. XIV), Tra economia e storia. Studi in memoria di Gino Barbieri* (Pisa 1995), pp. 223–250, p. 226; Andrea Mozzato, *Il mercato dei panni di lana a Venezia nel primo ventennio del XV secolo, Wool: products and*

In the Orobic valleys the domestic system, documented from the beginning of the thirteenth century, was employed, a structural resource in an area of demographic growth and in continuous connection with the city. The city merchants commissioned the cloth, woven from local wool, paying in advance, finished them and exported them. In the second half of the fourteenth century the communities around Bergamo sought to free themselves from subjection to the urban market and in the fifteenth century manufacturing, dispersed among a multiplicity of villages, became concentrated in some locations, such as Gandino and Lovere, completing the cycle of production in small autonomous businesses.³³

In a famous speech attributed to Doge Mocenigo (1423) some figures relating to the imports of Lombard textiles to Venice were included. Even if the figures are dubious, they broadly confirm how the Visconti capital kept the monopoly of quality cloth and production elsewhere was substantially based on middling grades.³⁴ On this premise, it is not surprising that the Milanese woollen industry should be the most protected. It was only after the mid-fifteenth century, however, that the competition of manufacturing outside the city, which imitated the cloths of the capital on orders from city merchants, and the importation of textiles not produced in the state, came to encroach on urban workshops. There was a reinforcement of the tendency to move production to outlying cities and to townships—Vigevano, Soncino, Canzo, Novara—where it could escape the controls over and the greater costs of manufacturing in the city of Milan. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, an area at the foot of the mountains that seemed to be growing in population, upper Brianza, became a centre for textiles. The norms systematically issued during the dukedom of Ludovico il Moro to protect Milanese cloth became a nuisance in the early decades of the sixteenth century, without the provisions succeeding in impeding the lamented fall in the sector. Only the best quality products perhaps survived the loss of competitiveness of the Milanese woollen industry, with the inflexible attitude of the guilds that set the wool workshops against the exporting merchants. There was, in fact, an integration of urban and rural manufacturing characteristic of Lombardy, in contrast to Tuscany, that explains the resistance and elasticity of textile manufacturing in face of economic crises. The leading role of city merchants in promoting the

markets (13th–20th Century), eds. Gian Luigi Fontana and Gerard Gayot (Padua 2004), pp. 1035–1066.

33 Mainoni, *Economia e politica*, pp. 27–78; Mainoni, *L'economia di Bergamo*, pp. 305–314.

34 Marin Sanudo, *Vite de'duchi di Venezia*, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, vol. 22, IV (Milan 1733), p. 953.

localities where cloth was produced, in a continuous relation with the *contado* based on the demand for work, should also be noted. This qualifies, despite the indisputable disagreements and polemics, interpretations which emphasize a perennial contrast between urban and rural production. With Filippo Maria there is evidence of the government's intention to monitor all textile manufacturing, so as to keep competition within bounds.³⁵

The second textile sector that originated in the communal era was fustians. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries all the cities of the Po valley manufactured this economical fabric, heavy and warm, a mixture of linen (the warp) and cotton (the weft), the response to the growth in demand for clothing following on from the expansion in population. An early crisis has been identified in the middle decades of the fourteenth century as a consequence of the development of production in German lands,³⁶ but this was a short incident, because in the second half of the century Lombard fustians were among the most exported goods to Pisa, Avignon, the Catalan ports and the German outlets. Milan and Cremona, however, were the only cities which continued to produce them. The *pignolati* of Cremona enjoyed a qualitative and commercial advantage over Milanese fustians.³⁷ As with woollen cloth, the production of fustians and other linen and cotton textiles spread in the fifteenth century to the territory of Milan, to Gallarate, Busto Arsizio and Saronno and, beyond the Visconti dominions, to Piedmont and Liguria. In the city there was, therefore, a slow decline, even if high quality Cremonese and Milanese fustians continued to be in request in the German markets.

One sphere in which natural resources and a high degree of specialization combined to form exceptional know-how was metallurgy. The workshops of the armourers and the smiths were one of the most celebrated aspects of late medieval Milan. This was how a Frenchman described them in the

35 Barbieri, *Economia e politica*, pp. 128–141; Mainoni, *L'attività mercantile*; Maria Paola Zanoboni, *Artigiani, imprenditori, mercanti. Organizzazione del lavoro e conflitti sociali nella Milano sforzesca (1450–1476)* (Florence 1996), pp. 22–33; Mainoni, *Viglaebium*, pp. 235–238; Epstein, *Freedom and Growth*, pp. 122–126.

36 Maureen Fennel Mazzaoui, *The Italian Cotton Industry in the Later Middle Ages, 1100–1600*, Cambridge 1981, pp. 129–153, pp. 144–145; Maureen Fennel Mazzaoui, *The Lombard cotton industry and the political economy of the Duchy of Milan in the second half of the fifteenth century*, in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, I, pp. 173–177; Beonio Brocchieri, *Piazza universale*, pp. 91–97.

37 Luciana Frangioni, *Chiedere e ottenere. L'approvvigionamento di prodotti di successo della bottega Datini di Avignone nel XIV secolo* (Florence 2002), p. 28; Frangioni, *Cremona*, pp. 388–90; Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica di Venezia dall'XI al XVI secolo* (Venice 1995), p. 158.

mid-fifteenth century: "Et y a en ycelle Lombardie xv cités et est la maistresse ville de ce païs Milan qui est une ville moult peuplee de gens de mestier qui font harnois d'armes, ovragés d'acier, de cuivre",³⁸ The mountainous areas of Milan, Como, Bergamo and Brescia were rich in veins of minerals. Trade in iron was subject in the communal era to strict control. With Bernabò and Gian Galeazzo Visconti a monopoly on the sale of semifinished products was imposed, as a signorial business venture, in warehouses ("fondegum ferarecce" set up in all the Lombard cities. The warehouses, run by a merchant nominated by the lord, sold iron, steel and agricultural implements, acting as a wholesaler for merchants and smiths. The "fondaci" were probably closed after the Venetian conquest of Bergamo and Brescia. The impressive supply of metallic products of all kinds available on the Milanese market, from iron wire to needles, spurs, chains, to the famous components of defensive armour, helmets, greaves, vambraces, cuirasses, has been studied in numerous contributions by Luciana Frangioni. Coats of mail were only assembled in the city workshops, because the wire came from wire-drawing workshops in the hills, such as those of Lecco. The evolution of armour, from coats of mail to plate armour, in the early decades of the fifteenth century, also signified the passage from craftsmen to merchant entrepreneurs who organized all the production. The most famous Milanese armourer of the second half of the fifteenth century was Antonio Missaglia, who had representatives in Rome, Barcelona and Naples. His factory could maintain all the armour of the ducal army, but also produced works of art, such as parade cuirasses, for which the princes of Europe were among the major clients.³⁹

At Brescia, until the fifteenth century, production of raw materials predominated over that of finished products. Letters sent by the correspondents of Francesco Datini from Brescia to the Pisan warehouse show that in this period Brescia was exporting above all semifinished products of high quality. Bergamo, however, was specializing in scythes. Only in the Venetian era did Brescian arms become famous. The loss of two mining districts to Venice encouraged

38 Quoted in Braunstein, *La geografia*, p. 4.

39 Luciana Frangioni, *Sui modi di produzione del settore metallurgico nella seconda metà del Trecento*, *Società e storia* vol. 12, 45 (1989), pp. 545–566; Luciana Frangioni, *Aspetti della produzione delle armi milanesi nel xv secolo*, *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, pp. 195–200; Patrizia Mainoni, *La politica dell'argento e del ferro nella Lombardia medievale*, *La sydérurgie dans les Alpes lombardes au Moyen Age (xii^e–xvii^e siècle)*, ed. Philippe Braunstein, *Ecole Française de Rome* (Rome 2001), pp. 417–453; Carmen Guzzi, *Miniere, fucine e metalli nel Lecchese nel xiv–xv secolo*, *Annali di Lecco* 2008, pp. 121–142; Nadia Covini, *L'esercito del duca. Organizzazioni militari e istituzioni al tempo degli Sforza (1450–1480)*, Roma 1998, pp. 364–5.

the exploitation of the mines of the Valsassina and the upper Lario, but the resources within the duchy were not sufficient for the demands for iron of the Milanese workshops, which had to have recourse to German imports.⁴⁰

The establishment of the silk industry at Milan, and only at Milan, towards the middle of the fifteenth century, was later than at Genoa, Venice or Florence, which had joined Lucca during the course of the fourteenth century. Over a century it became the principal sector of urban manufacturing. Demand for silk textiles was growing from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Marino Sanudo referred, certainly exaggerating, to Venice having exported “cloth of gold and silk” to Milan worth 250,000 ducats a year.⁴¹ It seems probable that the initiative was promoted by Duke Filippo Maria to attain independence from foreign, especially Venetian, products. In fact, the skills and machinery to weave velvets and “cloth of gold silks”, that required extremely complex looms, were lacking in Milan. In 1442, therefore, the Florentine Pietro di Bartolo was invited, with the promise of financial and fiscal incentives. At about the same time, however, there is documentary evidence of the activity of the Milanese Leonardo Lanteri, indicating that the decision was made in a context where other entrepreneurs were already taking action. The development of the Milanese silk industry was nevertheless gradual, interrupted by the mid-century crisis and influenced, in the second half of the fifteenth century, by the rhythms of the purchases by the court. In contrast to other sectors, it was born as a manufacture directed by merchant-entrepreneurs: the cost of raw materials and the high price of the product, always reserved for a very restricted elite, made necessary the presence of the “cloth of gold silk” merchant. In the beginning the raw material came largely from Genoa. The first silk manufacturers were nearly all foreigners, above all Tuscan merchants such as the Balbani and the Maggiolini, who brought numerous masters and workers trained in Florence, Genoa and Venice. Working of the gold and silver threads was

40 Frangioni, *Milano*, I, pp. 248–249; Frangioni, *Brescia e i suoi acciai*; Philippe Braunstein, *L'acier de Brescia à la fin du XIV^e siècle: l'apport d'une correspondance d'affaires*, in *La sydérurgie dans les Alpes lombardes au Moyen Âge (XIV^e–XVII^e siècle)*, ed. Philippe Braunstein, Ecole Française de Rome (Rome 2001), pp. 455–479; Kellenbenz, *Oberdeutschland*, p. 220.

41 Sergio Tognetti, *I drappi di seta*, *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa*, IV, pp. 143–170. On the origins of the Milanese silk industry, see the volume *La seta a Milano nel XV secolo*, ed. Rinaldo Comba, *Studi storici*, 35 (1994), pp. 871–1002; Maria Paola Zanoboni, *Produzioni, commerci, lavoro femminile nella Milano del secolo XV* (Milan 1997); Maria Paola Zanoboni, *Rinascimento sforzesco. Innovazioni tecniche, arte e società nella Milano del secondo Quattrocento* (Milan 2005).

introduced, calling on Genoese, Spanish and above all German specialists, including women.⁴²

The second half of the fifteenth century saw the multiplication of activities that only apparently had a distinct artisanal character, such as the glass and tapestry industries, embroidery, printing, and the development of paper manufacture, which was already widespread at mid-century. To the concession of Milanese citizenship, used systematically by the dukes in the fifteenth century to attract merchants and artisans, was added that of monopolies. These privileges, like “safeconducts against debtors” and other privileges granted to suppliers of the court and merchant firms (“littere passus”, “littere familiaritatis”), underlined the importance of a personal connection to the duke. In some cases, such as tapestry, embroidery and glassware, these were Sforza initiatives, intended to introduce new skills and production of luxury goods for the court. In others, such as printing, they were independent enterprises, operating in an extremely dynamic and receptive context. The dimension in which the entrepreneurs of Milan were active was well represented by the presence of various master glassmakers, from Antonio del Bello and Angelo Barovier of Murano, invited to Milan by Francesco Sforza, to Giovanni Montaione, who recruited workers in established glassmaking centres, such as Murano, Altare (Savona), and la Valdelsa.⁴³

If the role played by the Sforza, as by other Italian courts, in the promotion of new luxuries is beyond dispute, the question about the weight of ducal expenditure on public finances and the tax burden must be asked. The value of the

42 Paolo Grillo, Le origini della manifattura serica in Milano (1400–1450), *La seta a Milano*, pp. 897–916, pp. 903–905; Zanoboni, *Artigiani*, pp. 53–54; Zanoboni, *Produzioni, commerci, lavoro femminile*, pp. 90–92; Maria Paola Zanoboni, Battiloro e imprenditori auroserici: mobilità sociale e forniture di corte nella Milano quattrocentesca, *Storia economica XIII* (2010), nos. 1–2, pp. 147–186, n. 3, pp. 345–374; Franca Leverotti, Organizzazione della corte sforzesca e produzione serica, *Seta, oro, cremisi. Segreti e tecnologia alla corte dei Visconti e degli Sforza*, Catalogue of the exhibition (Cinisello Balsamo 2009), also online with further documentation, www.setainlombardia.org.

43 Arnaldo Ganda, *Filippo Cavagni da Lavagna editore, tipografo, commerciante a Milano nel Quattrocento* (Florence 2006); Maria Luisa Chiappa Mauri, Carta e cartai a Milano nel secolo xv, *Nuova Rivista Storica*, LXXI (1987), pp. 1–26; Guido Guerzoni, Novità, innovazione e imitazione: i sintomi della modernità, *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa*, III, pp. 59–88; Corine Maitte, L'arte del vetro: innovazione e trasmissione delle tecniche, *ibid.*, pp. 235–260; Maria Paola Zanoboni, Montaione Giovanni *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 75 (Rome 2011); Luca Molà, Il mercante innovatore, *Il Rinascimento italiano e l'Europa*, IV, pp. 623–653.

purchases by decidedly prodigal princes such as Galeazzo Maria and Ludovico il Moro in the last period of their dukedoms, the huge orders for silk cloth, furs, jewels and precious objects, about which we now have a considerable amount of information, constituted an element of great significance in the complex of economic and financial activities centred on Milan in the second half of the fifteenth century. The festivities, liveries, gifts to favoured persons and to the lovers of the duke, the phenomenon of reciprocal imitation between courts, certainly had a beneficial effect on Milanese workshops and on trade, because the demand could not be completely satisfied in Milan. Private commissions, lay and ecclesiastical, should also be taken into account. In the first decades of the sixteenth century the wars and the political weakness of the last Sforza resulted in an economic decline, shown by the succession of provisions against the importation of products competing with key sectors, woollen cloth, silk, furs, gold thread and brass thread. Nevertheless, high class manufactures, products of the silk industry and goldsmiths, arms and armour, continued to be produced well beyond the end of the Sforza dukedom.⁴⁴

Finance

Public finance changed profoundly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Towards the beginning of the fourteenth century societies of financiers and partnerships of citizens supported the political party in power and the issue, impromptu as it might have been, of shares in the public debt, continued. The formation of the Visconti dominion took from the cities the farms of their revenues. Whoever took the farm of a treasury paid part of the proceeds in advance into the Visconti coffers.⁴⁵ Financial resources were therefore an essential prerequisite for obtaining the management of a treasury, so entwining public finance with private affairs that they were difficult to distinguish. With the reforms of Gian Galeazzo, from around 1384, the concentration of the payment of the army in the Central Chamber shifted the necessity for finance from the peripheral treasuries to the Chamber, so as to pay military expenses from the centre rather than place the burden on the civic communes. Consequently, the financial pressure on the Chamber increased enormously.

⁴⁴ Barbieri, *Economia*, pp. 135–141; Barbieri, *Origini*; Leverotti, *Organizzazione*.

⁴⁵ Tommaso Zerbi, *La banca nell'ordinamento finanziario visconteo. Dai mastri del banco Guissano, gestore della tesoreria di Piacenza: 1356–1358* (Como 1935); Patrizia Mainoni, *Le radici della discordia. Ricerche sulla fiscalità a Bergamo tra XII e XV secolo* (Milan 1997), pp. 21–37.

The revenues of the local treasuries were used to reimburse credits given to the central treasury. This was a crucial phase in public finance, common throughout postcommunal Italy, and not entirely understood. Before Gian Galeazzo, the treasurers were Milanese or merchants from the Visconti cities, Piacenza and Cremona. This meant a beneficial recycling of financial resources which, however, when conflicts were no longer counterbalanced by the income from new acquisitions, ended with a series of bankruptcies, one linked to another, because the financiers of the Visconti had had to raise capital through loans. The financiers of the Visconti were the officials of the *signore*: *maestri delle entrate*, treasurers, customs farmers, administrators of the great Visconti properties, linked to the lords by a relation not just of credit, but of *familiaritas*. In the 1390s Gian Galeazzo established relations with a group of foreigners, mostly of Tuscan origin, who served him in the administration of the revenues, not only as merchant-bankers, but as officials, *maestri delle entrate* and treasurers, political informants, bringing liquid capital and the possibility of drawing on merchant-financier networks on a new scale: Vinciguerra of Siena, Niccolò Diversi from Lucca, Milano Malabarba from Padua, Pietro Rapondi from Lucca, Giovanni Borromeo from San Miniato; in the first half of the fifteenth century, with Duke Filippo Maria, Vitaliano Borromeo, Mariano Vitali from Siena, Sigerio Gallerani. Many among the holders of the civic treasuries came from the group of *campsores*, the bankers who, at least from the beginning of the fifteenth century, leased a bank in the Broletto from the commune of Milan. The criterion on which the banks of the commune were assigned was that of fidelity to the regime in power, and therefore the names of the holders reflected political changes.⁴⁶

The principal activity of the banks was the negotiation of letters of exchange, which were principally destined for Venice. The exchange transactions assured the supply of credit. In the course of the fifteenth century the importance of Milan as a financial marketplace increased notably. With Francesco Sforza the major financier of the duke was, however, the branch of his ally, Cosimo de' Medici, opened at Milan in 1452. Director of the Medici bank, from 1452 until his death in 1468, was Pigello Portinari, who never held a public office, but was rather a political figure and an intermediary between Cosimo de' Medici

46 Beatrice Del Bo, Mariano Vitali da Siena. Integrazione e radicamento di un uomo di affari nella Milano del Quattrocento, *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 166 (2008), pp. 253–293; Raymond De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank, 1397–1494* (Cambridge, Mass. 1963), pp. 261–275; M. P. Zanoboni, “Et che . . . el dicto Pigello sia più prompto ad servire”. Pigello Portinari nella vita economica (e politica) milanese quattrocentesca, *Storia Economica* 2009, pp. 27–107; Del Bo, *Banca e politica*; Mueller, *The Venetian Money Market*.

and Sforza. The supply of silks and jewels to the court was the object of the mercantile operations at Milan, while on the credit side the bank subsidised Francesco Sforza's campaigns in the kingdom of Naples. The ends of the Medici presence were, therefore, eminently political, disproving De Roover's negative judgement on the loans to Sforza.⁴⁷

If with the last Visconti duke there were treasurers and *maestri delle entrate* linked to the duke and capable of taking a place in the highest levels of society, such as Vitaliano Borromeo, with the Sforza the risky nature of the loans they were exposed to brought new men to financial offices and the great farms. These were merchant-bankers engaged in the major Italian marketplaces, Venice, Florence, Naples, and the fairs at Lyon: Antonio Marliani, Giovanni Beolchi, Francesco da Roma, the Latuada brothers, Filippo Pietrasanta and Cristoforo da Barberino, whose sensational failure between 1470 and 1472 was due to the difficulties of raising credits on the salt taxes and supplies of silk cloth assigned to pay them. The failure involved numerous depositors.⁴⁸ It is, therefore, evident that in the later fifteenth century the gathering of money by merchant-bankers, making use also of the availability of the resources of numerous confraternities and religious institutions, offered huge liquid resources and opened up great entrepreneurial and financial opportunities. In this field it was possible to make enormous movements of capital, lending to the duke and taking on the farm of the salt tax, the export licence of the woad, the lucrative, but dangerous business of supplying the court.

Gian Galeazzo attempted, in 1390 and 1397, to promote the formation of a public debt based on negotiable bonds and promising a market rate of interest, but this operation does not seem to have been successful. To these same years dates a change of practice in the circulation of currency in Lombardy, the abandonment of fixed exchange rates between the gold florin and silver coins. In Venice and Florence the exchange between the ducat and *grosso* had been kept fixed artificially until the central decades of the fourteenth century, then allowed to fluctuate. In Visconti Lombardy, on the other hand, the florin/silver currency exchange had been held stable, at 32 *soldi* a florin, from around 1330–1332 until the end of the century, when a series of devaluations began. During the dukedom of Filippo Maria and after 1474 monetary manoeuvres were employed, with varying success, to try to finance the deficit.⁴⁹

47 De Roover, *The Rise*, p. 272.

48 Mainoni, *L'attività mercantile*; Zanoboni, Battiloro, pp. 345–372; Leverotti, *Organizzazione*; Zanoboni, *Artigiani*, pp. 162–173; Zanoboni, *Rinascimento sforzesco*, pp. 508ff.

49 Zerbi, *La banca*, p. 132; Frederic Lane, Reinhold C. Mueller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice. Volume 1: Coins and Moneys of Account* (Baltimore 1985),

Public finance was based on indirect taxes on trade and consumption and on direct taxes, of which the most burdensome was the salt tax and, in the *contado*, the “*tassa dei cavalli*”. In addition to these, there were taxes based on the “*estimo*”, and forced and voluntary loans. It is risky to compare the revenues of different states, because the tax structures were different and yields depended on fiscal pressure. For Milan, some comprehensive data are available only for the second half of the fifteenth century. In 1476 the revenues of the Sforza were calculated as 516,000 ducats, those of Venice in 1463 as about 900,000 ducats, including extraordinary taxation, and for Florence, in 1471–2, there is an estimate of 256,000 florins revenue plus 125,000 florins of “*prestanze*”.⁵⁰ The enormous expenditure on the army, the administrative apparatus and, in the Sforza era, the splendour of the court, much exceeded the revenues, leading to very grave financial crises, such as after the death of Gian Galeazzo and that of Filippo Maria, and the end of the dukedom of Ludovico il Moro. In the course of the fifteenth century, and above all under the Sforza, a system of assigning the yield from various taxes to financiers was introduced, impoverishing the revenues of the state. On the fall of Il Moro, the king of France, Louis XII, assigned creditors an annual sum of 50,000 ducats to recover the customs and property alienated by the duke in the last decade of his government.⁵¹

The riches accumulated by merchants, financiers and entrepreneurs offered a secure route to social advancement in the Lombardy of the Visconti and the Sforza. In a manner still more evident than it would be in the sixteenth century, the Milanese financial market was characterized as a system of relations in which the economic, political and social orders were interwoven and mutually supporting.⁵² The flexibility of the enterprises of fourteenth and fifteenth-century merchants in commerce, finance, manufacturing and real estate conditions, and makes less clear, our perception of their specific role

p. 443; Carlo Maria Cipolla, *Il governo della moneta a Firenze e a Milano nei secoli XIV–XVI* (Bologna 1990).

50 Giorgio Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi* (Milan 1996), pp. 145–166; Luzzatto, *Storia economica*, pp. 192–194; Elio Conti, *L'imposta diretta a Firenze nel Quattrocento: 1427–1494* (Rome 1984), pp. 24–27. The Florentine data are calculated in florins di *suggello*.

51 Maria Ginatempo, Spunti comparativi sulle trasformazioni della fiscalità nell'Italia post-comunale, *Politiche finanziarie e fiscali nell'Italia settentrionale (secoli XII–XV)* (Milan 2001), ed. Patrizia Mainoni, pp. 125–220; Franca Leverotti, La crisi finanziaria del ducato di Milano alla fine del Quattrocento, *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, II, pp. 585–632; Stefano Meschini, *Luigi XII duca di Milano. Gli uomini e le istituzioni del primo dominio francese (1499–1512)* (Milan 2004), pp. 221–226.

52 See Giuseppe De Luca, *Commercio del denaro e crescita economica a Milano tra Cinquecento e Seicento* (Milan 1996) pp. 17–18.

within the civic aristocracy. Because of the presence of the *signore*, at Milan there was not that robust complementarity, if not identity, of interests between government and merchants witnessed in the Tuscan cities, as in the maritime powers of Genoa and Venice. For this reason it can be affirmed that the “transaction costs”, in the sense of the necessity to be part of the entourage of the *signori*, must have had no small influence on the choices of entrepreneurs and merchants.

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The Economy in the 16th and 17th Centuries

Giovanna Tonelli

The Dire First Forty Years of the 16th Century

In 1513 Leonardo da Vinci left Milan permanently. During his sojourn in the Lombard capital he worked on more than his artistic masterpieces and magnificent scenography for theatre props for the performances that entertained the court. He was put in charge of the design of a stretch of the 'Navigli', artificial canals that even today connect Milan with the Ticino river that flows from Lake Maggiore, and the Adda river that flows from Lake Como. The process of canalization began towards the end of the twelfth century and further strengthened the rich network of natural waterways within the Duchy of Milan; to the South, the Po river which carves its way across all of Northern Italy from the mountains in Piedmont to the Adriatic sea where it flows out between Venice and Ravenna; its tributaries Ticino and Adda, as well as shorter rivers and streams such as Bormida, Tanaro, Agogna, Scrivia, Lambro, Olona, and Seveso. Da Vinci did work on the project, and, although his work remained for the most part on paper, the intention of improving water transport, going as far as to engage the services of this Tuscan genius, serves to highlight the importance the Dukes placed on the transport network even to those who have never seen the impressive work of hydraulic engineering that is the Navigli.¹ Even the road network, the main routes of which dated back to Roman times, enjoyed special attention the likes of which was not to be recorded again until the eighteenth century, leading historians to judge the Lombard transport system to be the best in the Italian peninsula throughout the Modern Age.²

Similar care equipped sixteenth century Milan and the territories under its control with a well-structured network of communication routes, a factor of primary importance for the good running of an economy such as the Lombard one reaching out to foreign markets.

¹ *Cinquecento anni di Naviglio Martesana (1497–1997)*, Chiara Tangari ed. (Novate Milanese, 1998).

² Bruno Caizzi, *Strade lombarde. Itinerari e uomini in epoca austriaca* (Milan, 1985), p. 9.

Supplies for the 100,000 plus inhabitants of Milan³ and the communities under its control were thus facilitated; provision of foodstuffs, building materials, and the import of primary materials for manufacturing was deployed throughout the ducal territories.

Export was also facilitated. The highly sought-after luxury goods manufactured in the Duchy, including woollen products, silks, jewellery and precious metal working, and decorative parade armours, were transported far and wide: be it to the neighbouring states or out towards the most distant markets beyond the Alps or of the Mediterranean.⁴ Agricultural products, which exceeded the needs of the internal population, were marked for export. Cereals were destined for Switzerland,⁵ but these were not the only agricultural goods from Lombardy to be sought after by foreign markets. The excavation of a series of secondary canals, known as the 'rogge', which branch off from the Navigli, allowed for increased grassland cultivation, particularly in the already fertile area south of Milan, and with the increased production of fodder, came the permanent installation of livestock. A flourishing cheese production resulted, which, by the fifteenth century already boasted the crowning glory of local cheese production, that is 'grana' a well-known cheese that is a local variety of the cheese known as 'parmesan'. The high protein value and its long storage life made this cheese highly sought after, particularly in maritime cities where it was part of the food supplies for naval crews, not only in Italian ports but further afield: export to cities as distant as Antwerp is documented from the fifteen century.⁶

The presence of a transport network comprising both roads and waterways, together with the geographic position of the Duchy at the foot of the Alps and thus a necessary junction along the routes that from the heart of Europe ran to the centre and south of Italy, and also routes from France to Venice,⁷ facilitated

3 Giuliana Albini, "L'evoluzione della popolazione", in *Storia illustrata di Milano*, ed. Franco Della Peruta, 2 (Milan, 1992), p. 399.

4 Gino Barbieri, *Economia e politica nel ducato di Milano (1386-1535)*, (Milan, 1938).

5 Ada Annoni, *I rapporti tra lo Stato di Milano e i popoli della Confederazione elvetica nei secoli XV-XVI*, ([Milan], [1970]), pp. 24-5.

6 Giorgio Bigatti, "Dalla 'coltura dei caci' al caseificio: le aporie di una modernità incompiuta", in *Oro bianco. Il settore lattiero-caseario in Val Padana tra Otto e Novecento*, Paola Battilani and Giorgio Bigatti eds., (Lodi, 2002), pp. 15-6.

7 Gigliola Soldi Rondini, "Le vie transalpine del commercio milanese dal sec. XIII al XV", in *Felix olim Lombardia. Studi di storia padana dedicati dagli allievi a Giuseppe Martini*, (Milan, 1978); Luciana Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade. Costi di trasporto e vie di commercio dei prodotti milanesi alla fine del Trecento*, (Bologna, 1983).

transit commerce.⁸ Industries linked to import and export gained from this and from the transport across the state: couriers, caravan guides, transporters, farriers, innkeepers, and landlords. The treasury also gained in terms of taxes, levies, tolls, and iniquitous taxes raised on commerce.⁹

Prospering agriculture, blooming manufacturing, and large scale commerce had certainly enabled the Duchy of Milan at the end of the fifteenth century to be numbered amongst the 'richest countries in the world'.¹⁰

When da Vinci left Milan, however, the economic situation, not to mention the political one, was no longer the one he found in 1482 when he entered the city for the first time, nonetheless, it was not yet at its worst. The Duchy had fallen to the armies of the king of France, Louis XII, and in 1512 it had lost the Canton of Ticino and the Valtellina. Within a short number of years, in addition to being a battleground for continued skirmishes between the armies of opposing powers in the alternating control of the French, the Sforzas, and Imperial Spain, it was also to lose Parma and Piacenza and was devastated by plagues and famine that were to continue for a good fifteen years. The chronology is striking: the plague spreads in 1524, followed by famine in 1526, after which the Lombard population had to endure the tragic effects of the plague and famine combined in 1528 and 1529, in 1533 and again in 1539.¹¹ As Aleati and Cipolla have authoritatively illustrated, over the first four decades of the fifteenth century, it seemed as though 'the four horsemen of the Apocalypse had gathered, concentrating their devastating fury on the whole of the Lombard territory',¹² but as Vigo has equally authoritatively observed, this period can be seen as just a 'difficult parenthesis'.¹³

Transalpine travellers and diplomats from neighbouring states offer evidence as to just how 'difficult' this 'parenthesis' really was in documents in which they describe a country that was as depopulated and prostrate under the shadow of its economy as it was once rich in harvests, vines, and manufacturing.¹⁴ Demographic data confirm these observations. Between the end

8 On the Milanese transit commerce in the Modern Age see: Giovanna Tonelli, "Commercio di transito e dazi di confine nello Stato di Milano fra Sei e Settecento", in *Per vie di terra. Movimenti di uomini e di cose nelle società di antico regime*, Angelo Torre ed. (Milan, 2007).

9 Frangioni, *Milano e le sue strade*, pp. 117–37.

10 This assessment by Filippo di Comines is reported in Dante Zanetti's *Problemi alimentari di una economia preindustriale. Cereali a Pavia dal 1398 al 1700* (Turin, 1964), p. 26.

11 Giuseppe Aleati, Carlo Cipolla, "Aspetti e problemi nell'economia milanese e lombarda nei secoli XVI e XVII", in *Storia di Milano*, 11 (Milan, 1958), p. 377.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 377.

13 Giovanni Vigo, *Fisco e società nella Lombardia del Cinquecento* (Bologna, 1979), p. 11.

14 Aleati, Cipolla, "Aspetti e problemi", pp. 377–78.

of the fifteenth century and the first four decades of the sixteenth century, the number of inhabitants of Milan fell from 100,000 to 79,000.¹⁵ In the same period, the population of Pavia, home of the long-standing university, fell from 16,000 to only 14,000 and its surrounding areas registered a significant decrease in population too.¹⁶ The declarations of debt made by families and communities confirm the data, as do the insolvency declarations made by tenant farmers.¹⁷ Even the clauses benefitting tenants willing to bring about improvements in the estates, added into agricultural contracts at that time (for example the remittance of payment of one whole year's rent) have been referred to as a demonstration of the extent of economic prostration in Lombardy in the early sixteenth century. The impetus underpinning the concession of such reductions 'attenta maxima devastacione'¹⁸ leave no shadow of doubt over the devastating effects of the 'horsemen of the Apocalypse'. It would however appear that they can also be interpreted as an indicator of the desire to overcome the crisis of these years based on keen evaluation of the cost/benefit relationship, and of the awareness of a foreseeable improvement in the economic situation perceptible to local landowners even with catastrophe raging around them.

One person who had no doubt over the potential and the richness of the Lombard territories, and the possibility of a rapid improvement of the economic situation despite the region being drained by the combined effects of famine, drought, and war, was the new lord of the Duchy, the king of Spain and emperor Charles v, or rather, his representatives who constituted the strength, military apparatus, and men of power in Lombardy. No sooner as he supplanted the Sforza dynasty in 1535,¹⁹ Charles v increased fiscal pressure. 'Increased' here is a euphemism, as not only did he raise all the contributions exacted up to that point, he also imposed new ones, to the extent that one year on from taking control of the Duchy, he had almost doubled internal revenue. In 1536, for the upkeep of the armies, he imposed the payment of the 'Mensuale'; the burdensome 'Mensuale' amounted to 12,000 golden scudi

15 Domenico Sella, "Sotto il dominio della Spagna", in *Il Ducato di Milano dal 1535 al 1796*, Domenico Sella—Carlo Capra eds., in *Storia d' Italia* diretta da Giuseppe Galasso, 11 (Turin, 1984), p. 109.

16 Aleati, Cipolla, "Aspetti e problemi", p. 378; Enrico Roveda, "Una grande possessione dei Trivulzio fra Cinquecento e Settecento", in Enrico Roveda, *Uomini, terre e acque. Studi sull'agricoltura della "Bassa lodigiana tra xv e xvii secolo"*, (Milan, 2012).

17 Aleati, Cipolla, "Aspetti e problemi", p. 380.

18 Ibid., pp. 379–80, (citation: p. 379).

19 The Duchy of Milan, imperial fief since 1395, until the end of the Sforza dynasty in 1535 was 'devolved' back to the Empire. It passed to the Hapsburgs of Spain until the death of Charles II.

'per month', equal to $\frac{4}{5}$ of the one million lire revenue that the Treasury had estimated for the whole year in net of this new tax.²⁰ The remonstrations put forward by his Lombard subjects led to no reconsideration. Indeed, in the space of a decade this monthly levy rose from the initial 12,000 to 25,000 scudi, and went from being a one-off tax imposed for special purposes as initially forecast, the 'Mensuale' became a regular feature and as such 'the most important direct taxation from the period of Spanish rule'.²¹

The burden of military expenses used for the defence of that part of Northern Italy under the rule of the Hapsburgs of Spain from 1535 to the beginning of the eighteenth century, and that is nowadays known as 'Spanish Lombardy', was not shouldered uniquely by local subjects, however. From the moment Charles V took possession of the region, considerable sums of money were channelled in for specific purposes such as 'aid' or 'remittances', raked up in other territories belonging to the Monarchy. In the three-year period 1536–1538 the 'aid' that reached Milan amounted to at least one million scudi, that is to say five times the forecast internal revenue of the whole Duchy prior to the imposition of the *Mensuale*.²² Over two million scudi were forwarded to Milan over the five-year period from 1551 to 1555 and, despite the decrease in the 'remittances' in peace time, when military contingents were reduced compared with times of war, Milan, with its strategic military position in that it offered an alternative land route linking Spain with the Spanish Low Countries as opposed to reaching these territories by sea, and as such, Milan continued to benefit from these 'remittances' forwarded from Spain, Naples, and Sicily for more than a century after the advent of Charles v.²³

20 Vigo, *Fisco e società*, p. 30, note 85; Sella, "Sotto il dominio", p. 108.

21 Salvatore Pugliese, *Le condizioni economiche e finanziarie della Lombardia durante la prima metà del secolo XVIII* (Turin, 1924), pp. 263–64; Stefano Agnoletto, *Lo Stato di Milano al principio del Settecento. Finanza pubblica, sistema fiscale e interessi locali*, (Milan, 2000), pp. 38–41, (citation: p. 38).

22 For the scope of the money sent to Milan see: Davide Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona. Guerra, esercito, finanze e società nella Lombardia seicentesca*, (Florence, 2007), p. 316, note 47; for the revenue forecast for 1536 see: Sella, "Sotto il dominio", p. 108.

23 Mario Rizzo, "Finanza pubblica, impero e amministrazione nella Lombardia spagnola: le «Visitae Generales»", in *Lombardia borromaica—Lombardia spagnola. 1554–1569*, Paolo Pissavino, Gianvittorio Signorotto eds., (Rome, 1995); Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona*, pp. 315–31, 344–45, 355–57. On the political and economic interdependence amongst the countries under Spanish rule see: A. Musi, *L'Italia dei Viceré. Ingegrazione e resistenza nel sistema imperiale spagnolo*, (Cava de' Tirreni, 2000); Stefano D'Amico, *Spanish Milan: a City within the Empire, 1535–1706*, (Basingstoke-New York, 2012).

The Better Years: 1544–1580

The early 1540s saw the end of the long phase of concomitant disasters that had decimated the Lombard population and economy and the renewal was rapid and constant for more than thirty years. Demographic expansion is an unequivocal indicator of this growth. Natural increase in the demographic combined with the migratory influx of workers tasked primarily with the construction or adjustment of dwellings to house the demographic expansion, grand noble houses, monasteries, and public works, first and foremost the city walls that, on the order of the governor Ferrante Gonzaga, surrounded the cities of Milan and Pavia.²⁴ These factors led to the population of Milan increasing from 79,000 inhabitants in 1542 to 112,000 at the end of the century, ranking amongst the twelve most populous cities in the Continent, and the population of Pavia grew from 14,000 to 25,000.²⁵ At the end of the sixteenth century the small Duchy of Milan, covering only 16,000 square kilometers, accounted for a population of 1,200,000, that is to say, 75 people per square kilometer. This density of population was unequalled in Europe save for the Low Countries. The population density was elevated, as was the ratio of urbanization:²⁶ besides from the capital, in which it is estimated that more than half the urban population of the Milanese state resided,²⁷ 25% of the population of Lombardy resided in four cities whose population was between 10 and 40 thousand inhabitants²⁸ and in ten centres—including four cities²⁹—whose population numbered in the thousands yet numbering under the 10 thousand mark.

Such a high demographic figures inevitably led to an increase in the need for foodstuffs and an increase in profits linked to price rise for agricultural goods.³⁰ As a result the most fertile lands of the Duchy increased in value. There were the fertile plains that extended from Milan towards Pavia, Lodi, and eastwards towards Cremona and had benefitted from the abundance of water brought

24 Ferrante Gonzaga was governor of Milan, that is to say the representative of the Crown in situ, from 1546 to 1555.

25 Sella, "Sotto il dominio", 109; Roger Mols, "La popolazione europea nei secoli XVI e XVII", in *Storia economica d'Europa*, directed by Carlo M. Cipolla, 2 (Turin, 1979), p. 21.

26 On the high levels of demographic density and of urbanisation see: Domenico Sella, *L'economia lombarda durante la dominazione spagnola* (Bologna, 1982), pp. 16–18.

27 Vigo, *Fisco e società*, p. 17.

28 Cremona, Pavia, Como and Lodi (Sella, "Sotto il dominio", p. 17; Vigo, *Fisco e società*, p. 18).

29 Novara, Alessandria, Tortona and Vigevano; Caravaggio, Casalmaggiore, Domodossola, Gallarate, Monza, Soncino were not classified as towns but as "borghi grossi" [large villages] (Sella, "Sotto il dominio", pp. 17–8).

30 Zanetti, *Problemi alimentari*, pp. 93–105.

about by the canalization work undertaken in the previous century as well as from improvement works that had been carried out at that same time. In these provinces fields of grains, often those associated with industrial cultivation such as wheat or flax, and vines alternated with plots of forage, which was indispensable in supporting the already sought-after and flourishing milk and cheese production.³¹

The hilly lands to the north of Milan which further north than the Lakes Maggiore and Como rose upwards into the mountainous chain of the Alps, also participated in the process of economic growth in the second half of the sixteenth century. This contribution was made predominantly through the cultivation of mulberry trees, silkworm cultivation and silk fibre extraction from the cocoon.³² In these areas the meagre gains made from the cultivation of lands, which were not as fertile as the alluvial plains, were integrated with the proceeds obtained from the manufacture of low-quality goods for markets further afield. From Busto Arsizio to Gallarate, two villages along the route that travels from the capital to Lake Maggiore and on towards the Simplon Pass and Switzerland, the main industry was the production of mixed cotton cloths as well as leather and iron thread that were exported to the Levant via Venice. The area to the north of Milan as far as Monza produced wool. In Lecco, the main centre in the eastern branch of Lake Como, and in the area and valleys surrounding it, iron was extracted and worked, in addition to flax and wool.³³

In the towns, however, the impetus was towards the production of prestige goods, primarily silk factories, which at the end of the sixteenth century constituted the leading sector in Lombard industry.

Looms clattered in Como, Vigevano Pavia, Novara, Alessandria, but most of all in Milan. Sought-after Milanese silk was embellished with strands of gold and silver thread, velvets, ribbons and lace, accessories—stockings and bonnets—and spun gold represented 15% of the value of manufacturing production in the State and 22% of that of Milan.³⁴ The silk factories sated the need for luxury for the nearby states, such as the Duchy of Savoy. These products were sought after in Germany, Flanders, England, and to the east, in Poland and Hungary. The primary outlet of Lombardy's main export was Lyon, gateway

31 Aldo De Maddalena, "Il mondo rurale italiano nel Cinque e nel Seicento", *Rivista storica italiana* LXXVI (1964), pp. 357–59.

32 Domenico Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 28–9.

33 Vittorio Beonio-Brocchieri, "Piazza universale di tutte le professioni". *Famiglie e mestieri nel Ducato di Milano in età spagnola* (Milan, 2000).

34 Giovanni Vigo, *Uno Stato nell'Impero. La difficile transizione al moderno nella Milano di età spagnola* (Milan, 1994), p. 65.

for luxury Milanese goods into France exchanged with linen from France or Flanders and woollen goods from England.³⁵

Woollen fabrics were woven in Milan and throughout the towns of the Duchy. Wool production was the leading sector in the economies of Cremona and Como whose main markets were in Germany and Switzerland. Mixed textiles in linen and cotton, despite the market dwindling from the late Middle Ages, were still produced in Cremona, and linen only textiles were produced in Lodi. A series of renowned artisan products that were characteristic of the Lombard towns also existed: decorative parade armour and weaponry, which were created in the famous workshops of the Missaglia and the Negroli, were exported throughout the continent and are now displayed in many museums in Italy and beyond. Additionally, there were rock crystal jewellery and ornaments, the flagship of Milanese craftsmanship, leather articles also from Milan, and ceramics produced in Lodi.³⁶

Although all the cities of the Duchy contributed their own part to the state's prosperity, the supremacy of the capital in terms of production and trade was overwhelming. The glowing records of the time that describe Milan as containing a 'great quantity and diversity of goods and trades',³⁷ is supported by data from the valuation that took place at the end of the sixteenth century. 65% of commerce was concentrated in Milan with Cremona coming a distant second with 17.5%, whilst many cities accounted for less than 10%: Como (5.5%), Pavia (3.7%), Lodi (2.7%), Novara (1.6%), Alessandria (1.5%), Tortona (1.1%), Vigevano (1%).³⁸ This supremacy was to remain unchanged over time, and is again confirmed through quantitative data in the second half of the eighteenth century when collection of systematic statistical data began. Data collected at that time, relating only to the cities that had remained under Hapsburg power,

35 José-Gentil Da Silva, "Banque et crédit en Italie au XVII^e siècle", 1 (Paris, 1969), p. 264; Richard Gascon, *Grand commerce et vie urbaine au XVI^e siècle. Lyon et ses marchands (environs de 1520-environs de 1580)*, (Paris, 1971), pp. 108–12; Hermann Kellenbenz, "Commercio tra la Lombardia e l'Europa centrale e orientale. Dal xv alla metà del xvii secolo", in *Commercio in Lombardia*, Giorgio Taborelli ed., 2 (Milan-Cinisello Balsamo, 1987), II.p. 99; Claudio Rosso, "Seta e dintorni: lombardi e genovesi a Torino fra Cinque e Seicento", *Studi storici* 33 (1992), p. 177; Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, p. 47; Roberta Piccinelli, *Le collezioni Gonzaga. Il carteggio tra Milano e Mantova (1563–1634)* (Cinisello Balsamo, 2003), various letters.

36 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 47–51; Paola Venturelli, *Gioielli e gioiellieri milanesi. Storia, arte, moda (1450–1630)* (Cinisello Balsamo, 1996); *Armature da parata del Cinquecento. Un primato dell'arte lombarda*, José A. Godoy—Silvio Leydi eds. (Geneva-Milan 2003).

37 "Discorso delle gravetze introdotte in questo Stato di Milano et le loro origini" (Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense di Milano, Codici Morbio, n. 135).

38 Aleati, Cipolla, "Aspetti e problemi", p. 387.

that is excluding Novara, Alessandria, Tortona, and Vigevano which had fallen to Piedmont before the middle of the eighteenth century, indicate that the area with the highest level of mercantile activity was Milan and its surrounding area, distantly followed by the provinces of Cremona and Lodi, then those of Pavia and Como.³⁹

Milan, therefore, was a commercial hub in which money circulated abundantly⁴⁰ and where the interest rate seems to have been lower than other cities in the State, 3% against 6–7% elsewhere,⁴¹ an important factor for traders. Milan was a manufacturing and artisan centre able to satisfy the luxury needs of the upper classes of the Duchy, be they within its walls or living in other urban centres in Spanish Lombardy, of those with high income in the neighbouring states and further afield, and of the courts of Europe. Milan was a trading post for merchants hailing from a multiplicity of northern Italian cities, who sought supplies and who sold products from their hometowns. In the market squares of Milan, traders from Cremona sold blended textiles in cotton and linen; merchants from Novara sold hemp products such as ropes and canvases; those coming from Vigevano sold silk products and woollen fabrics; and in addition the products of the flourishing Lombard agriculture were sold there, from grains harvested in the plains surrounding Pavia, to the cheeses and flax produced in the area of Lodi.⁴² Milan was a Europe-wide centre of trade, which attracted and fostered the presence within its walls of both merchants who were ‘forestieri’ (merchants from the Duchy but not originally from the capital) and foreign merchants, who were granted exemption from excise duty. Milan welcomed them in the sense that they could open a workshop and reside there: in 1572 the foreign population permanently residing in Milan included 14 merchants from Genoa, 7 Germans, 2 merchants from Bergamo (a city that used to be part of the Duchy but that had been lost to the Republic of Venice), and 2 merchants from Lucca.⁴³ Perhaps what is of greatest interest, indicative as it is of a forward-looking city is that both foreign and ‘forestieri’ merchants could be admitted to the *Universitas Mercatorum*, if they requested to be and once their activity had undergone the same level of scrutiny as their Milanese colleagues. This institution regulated the merchants activity in Milan’s

39 Giovanna Tonelli, “Baldassarre Scorza e la riforma daziaria nella Lombardia asburgica”, *Nuova economia e storia* III (1997), pp. 54–6.

40 Giuseppe De Luca, *Commercio del denaro e crescita economica a Milano tra Cinque e Seicento* (Milan, 1996).

41 Aleati, Cipolla, “Aspetti e problemi”, p. 381.

42 Ibid., p. 382.

43 Ibid., p. 381.

market; and its highest committee, the *Consilium*, composed of 24 of highest profile merchants and brokers active in Milan (active in Milan, not simply from Milan), selected the merchants qualified to work on an international scale, updated commercial and financial rules, assembled the merchants' Tribunale, was called to pass judgement on commercial and financial lawsuits up to the second level of arbitration, whereas the final level of law courts, the one that could sentence exile from the State or the death penalty, was the prerogative of the Senate, the highest level of legislation in Spanish Lombardy.⁴⁴

Private initiative and economic institutions traditionally open toward foreign trade thus sustained the economic recovery in sixteenth century Lombardy, indeed withstanding the epidemic that struck in the two years 1576–1577 when the plague spread through the Duchy once again.⁴⁵

With regard to the contribution of the Spanish to this recovery, this is clearly seen in investments in the military sector. These investments did not merely entail the use of public funds for the upkeep and salaries of the armies, whose soliders then spent their salaries *in loco* thus providing a stimulus for local economies, but also the vast expenditure in terms of fortifications, such as the construction of the city walls in Milan and Pavia, as mentioned above. With regard to higher powers intervening in the economy, it is important to highlight the work of Charles v who was determined to deal with the unfair system of allocation of fiscal burdens inherited from the Dukes. Within this inherited system some territories were taxed more than others and there were disproportionate levels of taxation within individual provinces penalising the rural population over that of the towns; towns whose role it was to distribute the fiscal burden. Charles v also took into hand the systems of immunity and privileges, which operated in the favour of the mercantile classes. In 1543 the decree was issued for the commencement of a valuation not only of lands, but also of factories and 'mercimonio', that is to say manufacturing and commerce, in order to evaluate the overall wealth produced in the State and to distribute fiscal burdens accordingly. Opposed by the Lombard population, the fiscal census took sixty years to reach completion. Land evaluation was finalised in 1569;⁴⁶ by the end of the century the 'mercimoniale' evaluation could

44 On the organisation of the *Universitas Mercatorum* see: Giovanna Tonelli, *Affari e lussuosa sobrietà. Traffici e stili di vita dei negozianti milanesi nel XVII secolo (1600–1659)*, (Milan, 2012), pp. 60–4.

45 Sella, "Sotto il dominio", p. 123.

46 Gauro Coppola, "L'agricoltura di alcune pievi della pianura irrigua milanese nei dati catastali della metà del secolo XVI", in *Aspetti di vita agricola lombarda (secoli XVI–XIX)*, (Milan, 1973).

be said to have reached its conclusion. Despite this operation not producing objective results as the evaluations were not carried out with extreme accuracy, the valuation ordered by Charles V is significant as it annulled 'a large part of the fiscal privileges linked to the *status* of the contributor at a legal level'. The nobility could no longer withdraw themselves from contributions imposed to cover military expenses; merchants were no longer exempt from paying ordinary taxes; rural areas had the power to oppose iniquitous criteria for the subdivision of tax expenses that had previously been imposed by the towns by making use of the census data.⁴⁷

The Rumblings of Manufacturing Conversion: From the End of the 16th Century to 1626

In the final decades of the sixteenth century, the Lombard economy began to show signs of the changes that were to bring about its repositioning on the international market, in which the role it had held up until this point, an exporter of luxury goods, was to be limited.

Urban manufacturing activities, which had long been the traditional backbone of the manufacture of luxury items in Lombardy, were the first to register the signs of market contraction. The production of woollen fabrics in particular led to fears of trend reversal, after having been the leading sector in Lombard production throughout the first half of the sixteenth century. From the 1580s onwards, the fabrics produced in Como and in Milan felt the weight of competition from woollen textiles manufactured in Venice, Florence, England, and Flanders, and the wool industry in Alessandria and Vigevano did not fare any better either.⁴⁸

These difficulties, combined with the damages caused by a famine that spread across southern Europe in 1591–1592, did not lead to sufficient deficit as to undermine the manufacturing structure of the Duchy as the decline in wool production was offset by good performance in the silk industry.⁴⁹

Furthermore, the fluctuating economy recorded on many occasions in the early seventeenth century, with downward trends reported in 1605 and from 1607 to 1609, did not have a destabilizing effect on the local manufacturing infrastructure, even though some activities, as already experienced in the last

⁴⁷ Vigo, *Fisco e società* (citation: p. 252).

⁴⁸ Vigo, *Uno Stato nell'Impero*, pp. 71–2; Stefano D'Amico, *Le contrade e la città. Sistema produttivo e spazio urbano a Milano fra Cinque e Seicento* (Milan, 1994), pp. 77–80.

⁴⁹ Vigo, *Uno Stato nell'Impero*, p. 72.

two decades of the sixteenth century, showed signals of a downturn. The most significant is doubtless the fall registered by wool manufacturers located in Como whose annual production fell from 3,200 rolls in 1607 to 1,820 rolls in 1618. Even the merchants resident in Milan complained in 1613 that the city was no longer as prosperous as it had been in the past and that factories were 'alquanto infiacchite e indebolite' [rather enfeebled and weakened].⁵⁰

Indeed, during the first twenty years of the seventeenth century, the Lombard economy witnessed a period of expansion.⁵¹ The most favourable years were those following 1613, not least due to the consistent demands of the war effort for the war of succession in Monferrato, fought between 1613 and 1617. A few years after the conflict, it was said that the merchants had grown rich from the battles and, perhaps not without exaggeration, that they had even doubled their capitals.⁵² In order to substantiate the observation concerning the propulsive role of military presence in terms of internal demand, reference to contemporary sources and to data is sufficient. The army did indeed spend money, and they spent the high salaries of good currency with which soldiers were paid. The figures from 1618, when the war was over, are an excellent example of the amount spent on military salaries: with the number of soldiers present in the State was reduced after the war, the expenses for their salaries also diminished, in fact, it was reduced to under half the wartime sum, from 164,310 to 78,453 scudi.⁵³

The period of expansion was brusquely interrupted in 1619, when the Lombard economy was hit by the economic slump that affected the whole of Europe, with the exception of the Low Countries.

In the Duchy of Milan, as elsewhere in Europe,⁵⁴ the crisis manifested itself in an accumulation of unsold goods that led to reduced production. This recessionary phase was caused by a number of competing factors: the destabilisation of the German markets following the onset of the Thirty Years' War; the

50 Giovanni Vigo, "Manovre monetarie e crisi economica nello Stato di Milano (1619-1622)", *Studi storici* 17 (1976), p. 106 (cited in Vigo, *Fisco e società*, pp. 72-3).

51 Giovanni Vigo, "L'estate di San Martino dell'economia milanese", *Rivista milanese di economia* 12 (1984). On the crises at the beginning of the century see: Giuseppe Aleati—Carlo Maria Cipolla, "Il trend economico nello Stato di Milano durante i secoli XVI e XVII. Il caso di Pavia", *Bollettino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria* XLIX-L (1949-1950).

52 'Relatione fatta da i Signori Delegati . . .', of 20 February 1620 in the Archivio storico civico of Milan, *Materie*, cart. 267.

53 Luis Ribot García, "Milano, piazza d'armi della monarchia spagnola", in *"Millain the great": Milano nelle brume del Seicento* (Milan, 1989), pp. 351-352.

54 Jan De Vries, *The economy of Europe in an age of crisis, 1600-1750*, (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 20-21.

creation of industries analogous to those in Lombardy in states that previously imported from Lombardy; perhaps the announcement in 1618 of the monetary revaluation that was to take place the following year also played a part as the fear of increases would have led to stockpiling and a consequent reduction in production over the following years.⁵⁵ Fiscal politics does not seem to be listed among the factors that led to the crisis. Indeed, it seems as though fiscal politics did not excessively burden economic activities up until 1619 as in terms of commerce at least, taxes did not exceed 10% of profits.⁵⁶

The economic downturn was primarily felt by manufacturing in urban centres of the Duchy. The collapse of the woollen textiles industry in Como is relevant here: from 1,820 rolls in 1618, in 1628 production had diminished to 290 rolls; it is also worth considering that the decrease in the silk extraction and spinning industries registered in 1623 in Vigevano continued over the subsequent years.⁵⁷ The textile industry located within the city of Milan was also affected by the crisis; silk manufacture in particular, whose market share was the highest in the State in terms of 'mercimoniale' activity, as mentioned earlier. In February 1620 labour in the production of stockings, textiles, and spun gold halved compared to the number of workers employed by the industry in the early months of the previous year.

Despite the recession in the manufacturing sector, Milan did not collapse. The State remained open towards foreign economies, even if they were competitors. It did not close its gates to traders who were foreign or 'forestieri'. There were numerous foreign economic operators active in Milan in the early decades of the seventeenth century.⁵⁸ Indeed, according to a very cautious estimate, as contemporary documentation does not give the origin of all traders qualified by the *Universitas Mercatorum* for commerce on an international scale, at least ten of the new members admitted to this highest level of trade and finance in Milan between 1610 and 1629 were foreign.⁵⁹ Neither was protectionist politics adopted in Milan with regard to goods produced abroad, even if they competed with local production. This was a policy of expedience, dictated

55 "Relatione" (see above, n. 52); Vigo, "Manovre monetarie", p. 104.

56 Giovanni Vigo, "Economia e governo nella Lombardia borromaica", in *Lombardia borromaica*, p. 252.

57 Vigo, "Manovre monetarie", pp. 106–8.

58 Limited to the transalpine countries: "Tab. 1—Mercanti, ditte, società e case commerciali d'Oltralpe presenti a Milano (prima metà del XVII secolo)", in Giovanna Tonelli, *Materiali per lo studio delle relazioni commerciali e finanziarie fra Milano e i Paesi d'Oltralpe nella prima metà del XVII secolo* (Brescia, 2008), pp. 4–10. Online: <http://www.giovannatonelli.it/en/Doc.html>, sezione Annoni and Carena.

59 Tonelli, *Affari e lussuosa sobrietà*, p. 53.

by a desire to safeguard the interests of the local community as a whole, even if this was at the expense of some specific sectors of industry. This is the motivation behind the very unpopular decision of civic authorities in 1623 not to pass a law to prohibit the importation of woolen textiles at the exact time when Milan was coming out of the four-year crisis (1619–1622), which had left most of the textile workers without employment. Those in charge of civil procurement wrote that Milan did not benefit from the same geographical advantages as the harbour towns in which local and foreign commercial operators converged by necessity. As a consequence the use of caution was indispensable when passing measures that could prompt traders and bankers to direct their activities elsewhere, and which could lead to foreign reprisals against exported goods from Lombardy. It was a winning solution that was instigated by civil authorities but then pursued throughout the State of Milan until the second half of the eighteenth century.⁶⁰ In fact, Milan quickly managed to overcome the economic downturn that had hit the manufacturing sector from the late 1620s to the early 1630s. The wool industry showed signs of recovery in the early 1620s⁶¹ and, from the mid 1650s, the silk industry showed no sign of decline.⁶²

Manufacturing Riconversion: 1627–1659

As the 1630s progressed, a new long and dismal period began for Spanish Lombardy. Omens indicating much worse disasters had been visible from the beginning of the war of succession for the Duchy of Mantova that began in 1627 and lasted until 1631. In 1635 the French, allied with the House of Savoy, once again attacked the State of Milan and from that year until the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659, Spanish Lombardy became the scene of almost uninterrupted war. In addition to the war, violent famines were recorded in the years 1628–1629, in 1635, and in 1649 and the plague took a heavy toll on the Duchy

60 Ibid., cap. 1; Angelo Moioli, “*Assetti manifatturieri nella Lombardia politicamente divisa della seconda metà del Settecento*”, in *Storia dell'industria lombarda*, Sergio Zaninelli ed. 1 (Milan 1988); Giovanna Tonelli, ““Considerazioni sul lusso” nella riforma daziaria dello Stato di Milano (seconda metà del XVIII secolo)”, in *Modelli d'oltre confine. Prospettive economiche e sociali negli antichi stati italiani*, Antonella Alimento ed. (Rome, 2009).

61 Giovanni Vigo, “Nel cuore della crisi. Il dibattito sulle manifatture lombarde nel XVII secolo”, *Rivista milanese di economia*, 54 (1995), p. 93.

62 Stefano D'Amico, “Immigrazione e ripresa economica a Milano dopo la peste del 1630”, in *La Lombardia spagnola. Nuovi indirizzi di ricerca*, Elena Brambilla e Giovanni Muto eds. (Milan, 1997) p. 80.

for four consecutive years, from 1629 to 1632, only to return again in 1636, confined to Varese, a town to the north of Milan, and its surrounding area.⁶³

The epidemic decimated the Lombard population. From 1629 to 1633 the population of Milan fell from 100–120,000 inhabitants to 75,000; Milan returned to the levels of population prior to the plague by the mid-seventeenth century yet the State of Milan as a whole took until the eighteenth century to return to the population level of 1,200,000 inhabitants it had at the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁶⁴ With regard to the economy, agriculture, the core sector of the economy, recorded a general increase in incultivated land, a decrease in revenue from estates.⁶⁵ Yet despite being stretched to the limit by the combined effect of war, plague, and famine, Spanish Lombardy remained a region whose economy managed to ‘advance and innovate’.⁶⁶ Indeed, the years immediately following the plague saw the productive reconversion that led the State of Milan to maintain its position on the international market, despite offering a range of products that was different to those that it had been known for up until that time.

Milan had to reconvert its manufacturing economy at a time when demand for cheaper products was increasing and when local industries, which produced luxury goods at expensive prices, saw an increase in their production costs due in particular to increased labour costs with the workforce being at a premium after the plague had devastated the working population. It was more convenient, then, for Milanese merchants to satisfy internal demand with foreign imports which would have been paid for with the export of agricultural foodstuffs, and more frequently with semiprocessed silk, and with more traditional Lombard artisan products⁶⁷ such as majolica pottery or musical instruments, as with the production of luxury textiles that were still sought after across central and western Europe and in the courts along the Po Valley.⁶⁸

63 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 89–143.

64 Domenico Sella, “Premesse demografiche ai censimenti austriaci”, in *Storia di Milano*, 12 (Milan, 1959); D'Amico, “Immigrazione e ripresa”, pp. 77–8.

65 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 124–25; Aldo De Maddalena, “I bilanci dal 1600 al 1647 di una azienda fondiaria lombarda. Testimonianze di una crisi economica”, in Aldo De Maddalena, *Dalla città al borgo. Avvio di una metamorfosi economica e sociale nella Lombardia spagnola* (Milan, 1982).

66 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, p. 199.

67 Angelo Moioli, “Il mutato ruolo delle corporazioni nella riorganizzazione dell'economia milanese del XVII secolo”, in *Corporazioni e gruppi professionali nell'Italia moderna*, Alberto Guenzi, Paola Massa, Angelo Moioli eds. (Milan, 1999), pp. 51–52.

68 Enrico Stumpo, “Hercole gallico o Prometeo italico. Innovazione e tecnologia nell'economia italiana dalle guerre d'Italia alla seconda guerra mondiale”, in *Innovazione*

In the early 1640s the change in the export-import interchange, based on the export of agricultural foodstuffs, raw and semiprocessed silk and the import of finished products was clearly evident. Evidence for this can be seen in the words of the tax collectors who, when replying to the suggestion of prohibiting the export of silk in order to assist silk working within the Duchy, maintained that such an action would be followed by the absence of many goods produced abroad.⁶⁹ The various actions passed in order to assist the local wool industry lead us to believe that the turning point was already clear in the early 1640s and that it had contributed to the clear reorganisation of the wool industry even in the capital. It is estimated that in the year 1642 wool production in Milan contracted by one third compared to production at the end of the sixteenth century.⁷⁰ The ban on imports into the Duchy of some wool products, issued in 1646, can be read as the government's response to the numerous voices rising up at the beginning of the 1640s calling for a change of direction in economic policy towards a more protectionist stance. The import of textiles, wool products, and hats not produced in the State⁷¹ was prohibited in the cities where similar articles to those imported were produced: Milan, Como, and Cremona. The following year this action was extended across the State and also acted to reduce the import taxes on raw materials needed for wool production so as to favour *in loco* production. In 1652 it was the turn of silk drapes, with a measure that prevented their importation.⁷²

Despite the peremptoriness of the texts, these measures were wholly ineffective. As Vigo has unequivocally demonstrated, these decrees of exclusion of foreign goods from the local market could never have amounted to anything as they were not accompanied by policies that supported Lombard industry.⁷³ Furthermore, these measures may have been of some use if they had been applied but they were not. The governors who signed them, as did all the governors who held the guiding roles in Milan at least from the 1630s to the 1660s whenever they found it necessary to emit restrictive measures concerning commerce, inserted clauses that allowed evasion of the imposed restrictions, even when the order came from Madrid itself to cease trade with countries

e sviluppo. Tecnologia e organizzazione fra teoria economica e ricerca storica (secoli XVI–XX) (Bologna, 1996).

69 Moiola, "Il mutato ruolo", p. 52.

70 D'Amico, "Immigrazione e ripresa", p. 80.

71 Editto del 15-12-1646 in *Gridario generale delle gride* . . . , 1 (Milano, 1686).

72 Giovanni Vigo, "Politica economica e metamorfosi industriale nella Lombardia spagnola", *Rivista milanese di economia*, 40 (1991 ottobre-dicembre), pp. 113–24.

73 Ibid., p. 123.

at war with Spain, for example. As the Milanese merchants pointed out in a letter dating from the early 1670s to the governors, who could see the local situation much more clearly than Madrid could, every obstacle that blocked commerce would have negative repercussions on proceeds from revenue and therefore on the Spanish Crown, in additions to its Milanese subjects.⁷⁴ In the State of Milan, the collection of border taxes was in fact contracted out; if the contractors registered decreases in volume of import-export, according to the terms of the contract, they would have been able to claim compensation for damages, to the detriment of the entire revenue. Furthermore, it was obvious that in the following round of bidding, the tender for the contract would be lower. In addition to the lack of willingness of the governors to influence the foreign exchange due to a lucid calculation aimed at safeguarding state revenue, the connivances between the political power, in charge of customs, and the architects of the 'commercial shift' of the 1630s must be emphasized. The customs guards of the State of Milan were not public functionaries, but men employed by contractors who had won the contract of border tax collection; it was far from the interests of these contractors to place obstacles in the way of commercial trade, that, with its import duty, brought money into their coffers. Indeed, the contractors were the first link in a chain that comprised high profile bankers and traders active in commercial and financial brokering with foreign countries. It was these very bankers and traders who favoured the import of luxury products into the State of Milan and who sold on the foreign market the Lombard agricultural products that were, for the most part, obtained from the estates of the nobles who made up the governing administration of the State. These were the same operators, or at least they belonged to the same *Universitas* in which merchants and bankers who lent money to monarchies such as that of Spain were registered. This money was the lifeblood of the monarchy, particularly in times of war, when public spending rose; and, during this particular period, the Spanish crown was almost constantly at war. Local governors and the Spanish needed this effective support from mercantile and financial economic operators and they were, therefore, disinclined to obstruct business in order to aid a manufacturing sector no longer competitive on the market.⁷⁵ At this time Milan's revenue was barely able to cover administrative costs and interest on the public debt and, what is more, this occurred at a time

74 Tonelli, *Affari e lussuosa sobrietà*, p. 35.

75 Giovanna Tonelli, "Percorsi di integrazione commerciale e finanziaria fra Milano e i Paesi d'Oltralpe nel primo Seicento", in *Tra identità e integrazione. La Lombardia nella macroregione alpina dello sviluppo economico europeo (secoli XVII–XX)*, Luca Mocarelli ed. (Milan, 2002), pp. 161–64.

when the court in Madrid diverted to Catalonia and Portugal, due to the revolts that were taking place in those areas, the copious financial 'aid' to support military spending, of which Milan had been a recipient.⁷⁶

In fact, the response from the representatives of the highest level of local economic community to the measures adopted by the government officials of Milan and Madrid on the question of military expenses, was positive; and of mutual satisfaction. The financial officials of the State, who could no longer rely on 'remittances' coming in from other territories in the kingdom, put up for sale everything that could bring in immediate financial resources: fiefs and 'regalie' [public dues],⁷⁷ in the certainty of finding buyers able to take advantage of the opportunities offered. 'Regalie' did in fact constitute a guaranteed source of income for their owner, consisting as they did of toll charges on bridges and roads or moorage on lakes or rivers, or indeed taxes and monopolies on staple markets such as the production of white bread or on wine, which was a staple ingredient in the diet of all social classes of the ancien regime. Fiefs, on the other hand, were only partially a source of income for the owner as they had lost many of their medieval prerogatives by this time in the area of Milan, to the extent that the activities of the fief were monitored by the Senate, the highest court in the State, as we have already mentioned.⁷⁸ A fief was, however, indispensable for climbing to the top of the social ladder, ennoblement, as the title referred to the fief possessed. Indeed, the sale of fiefs at that time was considerable: from the 650 plus communities that showed as being 'long-since' enfeoffed at the beginning of the eighteenth century, that had been allocated by time of the death of Charles II, over one fifth were allocated between 1627 and 1659.⁷⁹

A period that was, therefore, rich in opportunity for those who were able to seize on the changing needs of the international market and adapt their trade quickly and for those who were able to take advantage of the tax revenue by buying assets with a good yield in the form of the 'regalie' that the crown was

76 Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona*, pp. 312–331, 342–345.

77 Aldo De Maddalena, "Nello Stato di Milano in tarda età spagnola (1636–1678). Cessioni e acquisizioni di beni feudali", *Storia economica* 111 (2000); G. De Luca, "Debito pubblico, sistema fiscale ed economia reale nella Lombardia spagnola: l'alienazione delle entrate. Prime direzioni di ricerca", in *Le forze del Principe. Recursos, instrumentos y límites en la práctica del poder soberano en los territorios de la Monarquía Hispánica*. Actas del Seminario Internacional, Pavia 22–24 septiembre del 2000, Mario Rizzo, José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, Gaetano Sabatini eds., 1 (Murcia, 2004).

78 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 247–97.

79 Franco Arese Lucini, "Feudi e titoli nello Stato di Milano alla morte di Carlo II (1700)", in *Storia di Milano*, 11 (Milan, 1958).

forced to lose given the urgency of the war effort. A golden period for those who could make good business out of the local war: those who managed to win contracts for military supplies and those who either had their own capital or managed to scrape together enough to lend money to the crown and advance money to transfer from one area of Spanish rule to another for the payment of the soldiers, making lucrative sums on commissions and interest.⁸⁰ These were the 'services' offered to the crown that allowed the families of the high level economic operators in Milan at that time, such as the Annoni, the Durini, and the Airoldi, not only to diversify their business interests but also to gain favour with the court and to be given titles.⁸¹

A dismal period, then, for the majority of Lombards whose strength had already been undermined by plague, famine, and war on top of which had to face a tax regime that scholars describe as particularly oppressive over the forty-year period from 1620 to the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659.⁸² The question naturally arises as to why out of all the territories of the Spanish crown were there no uprisings or revolts recorded in Milan, aside from the bread riot in 1629?

Historiography has taken this question on by analysing the position of the ruling classes and has shown that the local *élite* in the service of the Spanish crown not only gained economically but also cemented their own power.⁸³ With regard to government action, it has been shown that in order to avoid popular revolt after 1640 the Milanese fiscal system began to provide exemptions, benefits, and allowances that came into force in the capital and other means of recuperating money were sought instead of exacerbating taxation,⁸⁴ after having enacted various legislation seeking to support rural areas over the previous decades. From the sixteenth century it had been established, and repeatedly reiterated, that soldiers were to be billeted in *case herme* so that enforced hospitality of military personnel was not forced on private citizens, as was the previous practice and never abandoned as it suited the military.

80 Alessandro Pavarin, "Hombres de negocios, reti di relazione e 'reciprocità' nella Milano di metà '600", unpublished undergraduate thesis, Facoltà di Scienze Politiche, (Milan, 2002–03).

81 Giovanna Tonelli, "The Annoni and the Carena in Seventeenth-Century Milan", in David Jaffé, *Rubens's Massacre of the Innocents. The Thomson Collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario*, (Toronto, 2009), pp. 162–64; Tonelli, *Affari e lussuosa sobrietà*, pp. 127–30.

82 Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona*, pp. 347–55.

83 Gianvittorio Signorotto, "A proposito della fedeltà di Milano alla Monarchia cattolica", in *Sardegna, Spagna e Mediterraneo. Dai Re Cattolici al Secolo d'oro*, Bruno Anatra e Giovanni Murgia eds., (Rome, 2004).

84 Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona*, p. 353.

In the seventeenth century military supplies were subcontracted and warehouses were used in cities in order to avoid the oppression perpetrated by military commanders on communities. In 1636 a 5% reduction in interest on financial gains resulting from independent traders and communities.⁸⁵ As for Milan, the demographic data already discussed shows that Milan managed to recuperate its population numbers after the plague in a twenty year period, demonstrating an absorption rate in terms of the labour market that clearly was not compromised by the changes inflicted on the international market nor by the presence of the 'horsemen of the Apocalypse' in the Duchy. It is important to remember that it was precisely this increased cost of the specialised workforce in the textile industry that came about due to the shortage of qualified personnel that sparked off the process of conversion in manufacturing in the State. This goes to show that those who were qualified, at least in the leading sector of local textiles, that is the manufacture of silk, did not remain out of work as at the end of the seventeenth century there were still 16,000 employees in this sector in Milan.⁸⁶ Neither did the less specialised workforce have to remain idle. One just has to take a walk around the city centre streets to see how in that period Milan must have looked like a building site. Indeed this forty year period saw the construction of the prestigious homes of the Arese, Annoni, and Durini families, and the *ex novo* construction, the reconstructions, and the restructuring of around twenty churches.⁸⁷ This is not all; anyone who found themselves excluded from the job market could still find the means to live. The *Pia Loca*, private initiatives managed and maintained *at no cost* by private individuals for the benefit of all that had been in existence since the Middle Ages and continued throughout the *ancien regime*, represented the perfect union of assistance and social control to which anyone could turn in order to freely receive assistance for basic needs: food, clothes, medicine, and medical assistance. In order to provide an idea of the extent of assistance provided, it is sufficient to look at the number of food rations distributed by one of

85 Luigi Faccini, *La Lombardia fra '600 e '700. Riconversione economica e mutamenti sociali*, (Milan, 1988), pp. 115–18; Massimo Carlo Giannini, "Città e contadi nello Stato di Milano nella politica finanziaria del conte di Fuentes (1600–1610)", in *La Lombardia spagnola*; Mario Rizzo, *Alloggiamenti militari e riforme fiscali nella Lombardia spagnola fra Cinque e Seicento* (Milan, 2001); Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona*, pp. 254–58.

86 Angelo Moioli, "La deindustrializzazione della Lombardia nel secolo XVII", *Archivio storico lombardo* CXII (1986), pp. 182–183.

87 Filippo Tartaglia and Alessio Camusso, *Palazzo Litta* (Turin, 1986); Tonelli, *The Annoni*, p. 162; Cristina Geddo, *Il cardinale Angelo Maria Durini (1725–1796). Un mecenate lombardo nell'Europa dei Lumi fra arte, lettere e diplomazia*, (Cinisello Balsamo, 2011), p. 35; Maria Teresa Fiorio, *Le chiese di Milano* (Milan, 1985).

these institutions, the *Luogo Pio della Misericordia*: 11,149 per month at the end of the sixteenth century, 22,249 at the Christmas of 1770, in both cases over a population of around 110–120,000 citizens.⁸⁸

Peace and Economy: Towards the 18th Century

The combined strength of merchant class open to market forces and government requests who sustained the integration of the Milanese economy with the international economy, enabled Milan and the Duchy to maintain a very precise role in foreign markets once peace had been restored, which had, however, been redefined according to the new international subdivision of labour.

In the years following the Treaty of the Pyrenees, the flow of agricultural foodstuffs for export clearly increased in respect of previous decades, following the agricultural recovery seen in Spanish Lombardy after the uncertain period from the 1620s to the 1640s. During the last forty years of the seventeenth century, land that had been previously abandoned in wartime was cultivated, investments were made in the acquisition of seeds, tools, and animals to work in the fields, in the construction of new accommodation for peasant families, and increases were seen in crops with the highest demand, at the expense of the less profitable ones, some of which were entirely abandoned, such as spelt. In the fertile plains to the south of Milan the areas destined for the planting of forage and grass were extended, as was grain production. The available documentary evidence shows that between 1649 and 1720 wheat production doubled, legume production quadrupled, and the production of corn increased sevenfold. Rice production, which was in great demand despite high costs, increased in its adoptive lands around the cities of Pavia and Vigevano, and in the hills tree cultivation, particularly the mulberry, prevailed over grain production.⁸⁹

The countryside of the State of Milan was, therefore, thriving, both in terms of agricultural production, that can be argued as a continuity from the prosperity of the sixteenth century and the excellent productivity of the eighteenth

88 Lucia Aiello, "Il Luogo pio della Misericordia (1368 circa–1784)", in *Il tesoro dei poveri. Patrimonio artistico delle Istituzioni pubbliche di assistenza e beneficenza (ex Eca) di Milano*, Marco G. Bascapè, Paolo M. Galimberti, Sergio Rebora eds., (Cinisello Balsamo, 2001), p. 80.

89 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 199–207; Aldo De Maddalena, *Prezzi e aspetti di mercato in Milano durante il secolo XVII* (Milan, 1949), pp. 166–8; Angelo Moioli, *La gelsibachicoltura nelle campagne lombarde dal Seicento alla prima metà dell'Ottocento* (Trent, 1981).

and nineteenth centuries, and in terms of manufacturing, which also shows a situation of continuity between long-standing settlements and the first examples of industry in the region two centuries later. With regard to the pre-war period, the contribution given by goods manufactured in rural areas of the Duchy seems to have been more consistent. From the 1660s onwards the iron thread produced in Lecco was firmly established in the European markets. The Valassina, situated between the two branches of Lake Como, served as a docking point for primary materials for the spun wool industry in the hub for this industry that gravitated towards the city of Bergamo, a subject of the Republic of Venice. The flow of mixed textiles in linen and cotton out of the valley carved by the Olona river towards foreign lands was also consolidated.⁹⁰ The most consistent contribution of rural industry in foreign exchange remained, however, the twisting and spinning of silk, an activity that was widespread in the area to the north of Milan and around the town of Como, and also in the neighbouring states: in Lugano and in Bergamo.⁹¹

The alterations in the international division of labour, and in consequence in the organisation of Milanese productivity, and in the exchange between the State of Milan and other countries should not lead us to believe that these were to the detriment of the role held from the capital until then as a centre of finance and commerce of international importance. Quite the contrary in fact, historiography agrees in the belief that as the seventeenth century progressed Milan's role was strengthened in this respect, highlighting the increase in exchanges that cause the increase in gold and silver coinage issued by the Milanese mint in that period. With the triumph of the Simplon pass over its rival in Piedmont, the Lombard capital found itself operating as primary trading centre not just for the trade from transalpine German countries and Genoa, but also trade travelling en route from the Ligurian ports towards Geneva and Lyon, and vice versa. Milan's role as 'emporium' for the Duchy and neighbouring states was equally consolidated, as well as providing luxury products for the highest spending classes in most of northern Italy.⁹²

90 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 193–98.

91 Luigi Trezzi, "Un caso di deindustrializzazione della città: i molini da seta a Milano e nel Ducato (secoli XVII e XVIII)", *Archivio storico lombardo* CXII (1986).

92 Carlo Maria Cipolla, *Mouvements monétaires dans l'Etat de Milan (1580–1700)*, (Paris, 1952), p. 42; Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 153–55; Marzio Achille Romani, "A Milano, città sì grande et famosa, non vi sono cima d'huomini?", in "Millain the great", p. 375; Moiola, *Il mutato ruolo*, p. 67.

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Culture in Lombardy, ca. 1350–1535

Massimo Zaggia

The Visconti State in the Mid 14th Century and a Codex for Bruzio Visconti

The situation of the Visconti state in the mid 13th century is well-represented visually by the initial page of a codex destined for Bruzio Visconti, the current ms Latin 6467 held in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.¹ The large, illuminated initial shows the author, the Florentine friar Luca Mannelli, in his Dominican habit, in the act of offering to the *magnifico et generoso domino domino Brucio Vicecomiti* his own text, a *Compendium moralis philosophie*.² At the top of the page, a large oval depicts a city within solid walls, with the caption *Mediolanum*; along the two sides are 12 tondi which depict the same number of cities, all identified with a clear caption: on the left Piacenza, Parma, Bergamo, Novara, Asti, and Lodi, and on the right Brescia, Cremona, Como, Vercelli, Bobbio, and Crema. The style of the decoration is clearly from Bologna, however, as this city is missing from the series of tondi—it became part of the Visconti dominion in 1350—it is reasonable to believe that this codex dates from prior to (or slightly prior to) 1350.

In the mid 14th century, then, even in terms of book production, the Milan of the Visconti was no longer perceived merely as a prosperous Italian comune in the Po Valley, as it was described at the end of the 13th century in works like the *De magnalibus urbis Mediolani* by Bonvesin da la Riva. It was presented as the capital of a supra-regional state that ruled over a good part of the Po Valley and that sought further expansion. Even the culture of this city and state could no longer be the municipal culture depicted in Bonvesin's Latin and vernacular works.

1 *Bologne et le Pontifical d'Autun*, eds. François Avril, Massimo Medica (Langres, 2012), pp. 113–16, tav. 1–2.

2 Tommaso Kaeppli, “Luca Mannelli († 1362) e la sua *Tabulatio et expositio Senecae*”, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 18 (1948), pp. 237–64.

Francesco Petrarch's Sojourns in Milan and Pavia

In the mid 14th century whilst on the political front the lordship of the Visconti was being asserted, a gradual yet clear turning point at a cultural and literary level was also emerging. The most important event culturally was Petrarch's long sojourn in Milan: in June 1353 the Tuscan intellectual decided to accept the invitation of the Archbishop and Lord of Milan, Giovanni Visconti, and moved to Milan for eight years, as a guest of the Visconti. Petrarch remained largely indifferent to the deferential criticism from friends and correspondents who reproached him for accepting the favours of a tyrant; indeed in some of his writings he did not hold back in his panegyric to the lords that had so freely given him hospitality and the comfort in which to study, allowing him the greatest freedom in thought and in writing, never asking anything in return, or almost never. Furthermore, given that Petrarch was the most famous intellectual in Western Christendom, in frequent correspondence with the most important political and literary figures of the time, his presence alone gave lustre to the court and to the city: in those years, therefore, Milan could be seen as one of the cultural capitals of the age.³

Eight years later, in June 1361, Petrarch leaves Milan and heads for the Veneto, he was to return on a number of occasions for brief sojourns in Lombardy: October to November 1363 he was in Pavia and Milan; in the second half of 1365 he was again in Pavia (where he wrote a description of the city in *Senilis* v 1) with trips to Milan; then in the second half of 1366 and 1367; from May to July in 1368 staying in both Milan and Pavia; and lastly June and July 1369 in Pavia.

During his time in Milan and Pavia, Petrarch was free to dedicate himself to his study and to writing, which increased his fame throughout Europe. He worked intensely on his Latin verses in *Africa* (with postillae) and the *Epystole*; on the Latin prose of the *De viris illustribus*, the *De vita solitaria*, the *De remediis utriusque fortune* and many epistles; and also on the vernacular verse of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and the *Triumphs*. In 1355, replying against the accusations of Cardinal Jean de Caravan, he wrote the *Invectiva contra quendam magnis status hominem sed nullius scientie aut virtutis*, in which his own personal defense is extended into a criticism of the Curia in Avignon and an elegy of the Visconti, unjustly considered tyrants. Also in 1355, Petrarch completed the *Invective contra medicum*. In 1357 he released his *Bucolicum carmen*, and completed the extensive editing of the *De otio religioso*. On 4 April 1358,

3 Enrico Fenzi, "Ancora sulla scelta filo-viscontea di Petrarca e su alcune sue strategie", *Studi petrarcheschi*, n.s. 17 (2004), pp. 51–80.

Petrarch dedicates his *Itinerarium breve de Ianua usque ad Ierusalem et Terram Sanctam* to Giovanni Mandelli, nephew of Giovanni Visconti, who requested that Petrarch join him in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Petrarch completed his first collection of *Familiares* in 1360 which were to be extended later in 1364–65; and in 1366 in Pavia his faithful copyist Giovanni Malpaghini completed the transcription of the definitive collection, of which the author declared himself rather satisfied. In the meantime, in 1361 Petrarch had begun the next collection of *Seniles*. In Pavia, dated 12 October 1366, Petrarch released his *De remediis utriusque fortune*, the most extensive of his works. In 1367 between the Veneto and Pavia, he brought to conclusion his treatise *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, which he released in 1371.

At the same time, whilst in Milan, Petrarch continued to augment his library, which gradually became the most refined private collection of the time. Furthermore, he benefitted from the treasures held in the old libraries in Milan. In this way, from the exemplars held in the Basilica of St Ambrose, he had some of the works of St Ambrose transcribed, the transcription is the current ms. Lat. 1757 in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.⁴ What is more, in early 1354 Petrarch received from the Byzantine ambassador Nicola Sigero the gift of a codex (now ms. Ambrosiano I 98 inf.) containing the *Iliad* in Greek, which was the first example of a Homeric manuscript written in Greek to be possessed by a Western intellectual. Petrarch also wanted the Latin translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* undertaken by the erudite scholar Leonzio Pilato which he then had his copyist Giovanni Malpaghini copy (now ms. Lat. 7880 I and II of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France) on which the following inscription in Petrarch's hand can be found: *Domi scriptus, Patavi ceptus, Ticini perfectus, Mediolani illuminatus et legatus anno 1369*.⁵ On the whole, a *atelier* formed around him that specialized in the production of Latin codices (containing the writings of classic and patristic authors, as well as Petrarch's own works), transcribed with philological accuracy and sober ornamentation.⁶

Petrarch's *status* in Milan—unique and exceptional for the era—was not that of a true *cortier* or that of a functionary held in continued collaboration. He was, in fact, given the freedom to engross himself in his studies, and only

4 Federica Santirosi, *Le postille del Petrarca ad Ambrogio (codice Parigino Lat. 1757)* (Florence, 2004).

5 Tiziano Rossi, *Il codice Parigino Lat. 7880 I: Iliade di Omero tradotta in latino da Leonzio Pilato con le postille di Francesco Petrarca* (Milan, 2003), to be read in connection with Marco Petoletti's review in *Aevum* 78 (2004), pp. 887–94.

6 Maria Monica Donato, " 'Minietur ligeturque . . . per magistrum Benedictum': un nome per il miniatore milanese del Petrarca", in *Opere e giorni. Studi su mille anni di arte europea dedicati a Max Seidel*, eds. Klaus Bergdolt, Giorgio Bonsanti (Venice, 2001), pp. 189–200.

rarely were requests made for public appearances, and for these he would produce a text for each occasion, which increased the prestige not only of the author but also of his Milanese patrons. In November 1353 Petrarch undertook a diplomatic mission to Venice on behalf of the Visconti and delivered an *Oratio super pace tractanda*; on 7 October 1354, two days after the death of Giovanni Visconti, he delivered the funeral oration; from May to August 1356 he was invited by the Visconti to Basel and Prague so as to attain the favour of the Emperor in the war against the Este, the Gonzaga, and the Marquis of Monferrato, and he obtained the title of count palatine; on 9 June 1358 on the occasion of the Visconti's recapture of Novara, he delivered his *Oratio in civitate Novarie*; from December 1360 to March 1361 he undertook an important diplomatic mission to Paris and on 13 January 1361 he pronounced his *Collatio brevis coram Iohanne Francorum rege*.

For at least two centuries, the figure of Petrarch continued to be seen in Milan and in Lombardy as the pinnacle of local glory in terms of culture. His cultural legacy consisted primarily of a deep-rooted cult of Latin classics and a prominent inclination towards the collection of books and antiques.

Around and After Petrarch: Cultural Trends in the Second Half of the 14th Century

When he was in Milan and Pavia, Petrarch did not have a school and did not organise a circle of followers (and he kept his distance from the newly-formed University of Pavia); however, he did cultivate high level personal relationships, establishing himself as an intellectual model to admire and follow. Clearly, he received visits from admirers and friends: for example, in March 1359, he welcomed to Milan Giovanni Boccaccio, and following the visit he wrote an important *Familiaris* (XXI 15) to illustrate the discussion he had with his guest, in particular on the subject of Dante.

Around Petrarch, figures that can be linked under the heading 'friends of Petrarch' begin to take shape (each with their own specific individuality), such as Paganino Bizzozzero, and later Moggio Moggi. These individuals mark the dawn of the early Humanism of the mid 14th century (or just after) that rose around the figure of Petrarch.⁷ Amongst the 'friends of Petrarch', we can also note Gabrio Zamorei, the jurist and man of letters who wrote the epitaph transcribed on the sarcophagus of the archbishop Giovanni Visconti, who died on 5 October 1354. That epitaph, *Quam fastus, quam pompa levis, quam gloria*

7 Claudio Felisari, "Un amico del Petrarca: Paganino da Bizzozzero", *Studi petrarcheschi*, n.s. 1 (1984), pp. 245–51; Moggio Moggi, *Carmi ed epistole*, ed. Paolo Garbini (Padua, 1996).

mundi, became widely diffused in tens or hundreds of manuscripts, becoming almost a sign of recognition for the cultural output originating in Milan.⁸

Even Petrarch, however, had his opponents. In particular Bruzio Visconti, illegitimate son of Luchino, Giovanni's brother, who wrote a harsh criticism of Petrarch of which there are no extant copies. Petrarch's response came in the form of three metric epistles (*Ep.* 11, 10, 13 and 17). Furthermore, between 1336 and 1357 Bruzio wrote four *canzone*, a ballad, and two sonnets, which are all in keeping with the production of lyric poetry in the 14th century by then based predominantly on Tuscan models.⁹

Bruzio Visconti's vernacular poetry in the mid 14th century shows a linguistic and literary period that departs from the local tradition, represented by Bonvesin de la Riva. In late 13th century and early 14th century Milan, Bonvesin was a modest school teacher; he wrote a *Vita scholastica* in Latin verse whose fame endured for centuries in the school world. He also wrote a trattatello in Latin on the greatness of Milan, *De magnalibus urbis Mediolani*, which harks back to the medieval tradition of *laudes Mediolani*. His greatest contribution can be seen in his vast production of moral and religious works written in the Milanese vernacular using monorhymed alexandrine quatrains from the French tradition. In addition to Milan, other municipal centres in Lombardy had given voice to their own local literature using dialect, Cremona in particular, where we can place the literature of Gerardo Patecchio and Uguccone da Lodi. However, as the 14th century progressed, this municipal literature produced in local dialect rapidly declined.

A clear process of Tuscanisation began to take hold in Lombard writing from the second quarter of the 14th century, due primarily to the success of poets of Tuscan origin such as Fazio degli Uberti (with his *Dittamondo* and other poems), Domenico da Montichiello, and others.¹⁰ The increasing success of Dante's *Commedia* in Lombardy, just as in the whole of northern Italy, quickened this process. From that time onwards, vernacular writings moved increasingly towards the Tuscan model, not only in terms of literary output but also in chancelleries and even in some writing pertaining to the mercantile sectors.¹¹

8 Costanza Faraggiana da Sarzana, "Gabrio Zamorei: un funzionario visconteo amico del Petrarca", *Studi petrarcheschi*, n.s. 1 (1984), pp. 227–43.

9 Bruzio Visconti, *Le rime*, ed. Daniele Piccini (Florence, 2007).

10 Maria Antonietta Marogna, "Una corrispondenza in rima tra Fazio degli Uberti e Luchino Visconti", *Studi di filologia italiana* 59 (2011), pp. 213–32.

11 Joshua Brown, "Evidence for Early Tuscanisation in the Commercial Letters of the Milanese Merchant Giovannino da Dugnano (?–1398) in the Datini Archive in Prato", *Italica* 89 (2012), pp. 464–88, providing early bibliography.

Clearly, this tendency did not affect all sectors, and the production of texts of popular religion remained particularly linked to local customs (and language). In this perspective, an excellent example of 14th century prose in Lombard dialect is the Pavian vernacularisation of an oration of Saint John Chrysostom, *Neminem laedi nisi a se ipso*. Other interesting examples can be seen in a version of the legend of Saint Mary of Egypt in vernacular lines of nine syllables, transcribed in 1384 by Arpino Broda, a notary from Pavia (current ms II.III.131 in the Bibl. Nazionale Centrale di Firenze);¹² and in a contemporary biography of Bonacosa Becalòe from Milan written in Lombard prose (perhaps Pavian).¹³ In mid to lower cultural circles, these local traditions endured over time: between 1429 and 1433 Giovanni Francesco Cignardi of Milan gathered a large collection of texts predominantly written in vernacular (current ms Ambrosiano B 95 sup.), that, amongst other texts, included the verses of Bonvesin da la Riva, short hagiographic poems (on Saints Andrew, Lucy, Margaret, and others), proverbs, and two works of chivalric prose.

Chivalric literature continued to be conveyed, at the highest levels, in French and for this reason for Bernabò Visconti, for example, a lavishly decorated codex of *Lancelot du Lac* and another of *Guiron le courtois* were created (current ms Fr. 343 and ms N.A. Fr. 5243 respectively, both held in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France). Chivalric literature in *langue d'oïl* continued to be fostered, particularly at the courts, throughout the 14th century and beyond.¹⁴ There is no certainty, however, as to whether chivalric literature adapted, at least in part, into local vernacular existed in Milan. The hypothesis formulated by Carlo Dionisotti who suggested that the *Entrée d'Espagne* was drafted in Viscontian Milan remains intriguing.¹⁵

12 *La leggenda di Santa Maria Egiziaca nella redazione pavese di Arpino Broda*, ed. Silvia Isella Brusamolino (Milan-Naples, 1992).

13 Even a more archaic text in verse such as the *Leggenda di Santa Margherita* continued to inspire substantial innovation throughout the 14th and 15th century: Fabio Zinelli, "Tradizione discorsiva e tradizione testuale nella *Margherita* 'altolombardisch' (in margine a una nuova edizione)", *Filologia italiana* 9 (2012), pp. 27–48.

14 *Narration et stratégies de l'illustration: codex et romans chevaleresques dans l'Italie du Nord (XIV^e–XVI^e siècle)*, Univ. de Lausanne, 22–23 February 2013, forthcoming conference proceedings.

15 Carlo Dionisotti, "*Entrée d'Espagne, Spagna, Rotta di Roncisvalle*", 1959; reprinted in Idem, *Scritti di storia della letteratura italiana. I. 1935–1962* (Rome, 2008), pp. 277–313. Furthermore, in the middle of the 15th century, the chivalric tradition was articulated in prose in the *Tavola ritonda* commented and illuminated in Cremona in 1446, see ms Palatino 556 Bibl. Nazionale Centrale di Firenze: facsimile with appended volume, ed. Roberto Cardini (Rome, 2009).

Historiography, on the other hand, continued to be conveyed in Latin. In this sector, the six Milanese chronicles written by Galvano Fiamma (d. 1344) are of fundamental importance. These chronicles were widely diffused throughout the 14th and 15th centuries, the most widespread being the *Manipulus florum*, which is transmitted from at least 24 manuscripts. The chronicles of Galvano Fiamma were extended, reshaped, and finally at the turn of the 15th century, translated into the vernacular.¹⁶

Galvano Fiamma, a Dominican friar from the convent of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan, proves to be a useful figure in demonstrating the cultural vivacity of some religious centres. Sant'Eustorgio in particular housed an important library as did the neighbouring Milanese convent of San Francesco Grande. Other collections with traditions dating further back include the collection of patristic writing in the canonical library of the Basilica of Saint Ambrose, the collections linked to the cathedral, others held by Benedictine organizations in the city and the region. The Certosa of Pavia can be added to this list from 1396 when it was chosen by Gian Galeazzo Visconti as the family mausoleum and where an impressive library was established.¹⁷

The Establishment of the University of Pavia in 1361: Medical and Legal Culture

Alongside cultural accomplishments, the most important initiative undertaken by the Visconti family in the second half of the 14th century was the establishment, by the imperial charter dated 13 April 1361 for a *studium generale* with the power to award degrees in both canonical and civil law, in medicine, and in the liberal arts. Shortly after, on 27 October 1361 an ordinance issued by Galeazzo II imposed that subjects of the Visconti state were compelled to attend the University of Pavia; a duty which was reiterated in many further ordinances. Indeed, the University of Pavia became immediately defined as a university sponsored by and controlled by the Visconti state, and almost obligatory place of university study for their subjects (a privileged position that lasted, with various alterations, until the 20th century).

16 Paolo Tomea, *Tradizione apostolica e coscienza cittadina a Milano nel Medioevo. La leggenda di san Barnaba* (Milano, 1993), pp. 130–31. A good vernacular version of the *Manipulus florum* dais found in the mss Trivulziano 1385 e It. 2100 of the Bibl. Nazionale de France.

17 Luciano Gargan, *L'antica biblioteca della Certosa di Pavia* (Rome, 1998).

In the space of but a few decades, the university rapidly became rooted in Pavia with a large influx of students, a functioning structure, and many highly qualified lecturers. The success of this initiative can also be seen in relative terms when contrasted with other universities established at around the same time, also on the wishes of local Lords (the Savoy family in Turin, the Este family in Ferrara), which, at least initially, did not attain the same success. Until at least the end of the 15th century (apart from times of war or epidemic) the University of Pavia was the leading university in Northern Italy, and was competing with the older centres of learning found in Bologna and Padua. As a result, Pavia underwent a complete economic, social, and cultural transformation. This transformation also had an impact in the circulation of books in which texts on law and medicine were prevalent as they were of greatest use for university education.¹⁸

From amongst the illustrious figures linked to that institution, two names are particularly deserving of attention: in medicine, Biagio Pelacani, a famous and debated doctor and philosopher; in law, Baldo degli Ubaldi from Perugia, called to Pavia in 1390 where he died in 1400. Author of over 2000 *consilia*, in 1393 in Pavia, Ubaldi released his *Lectura super usibus feudorum*, with a solemn *subscription*. This work was a fundamental systematization pertaining to legal thought in feudal matters that spread across Europe in dozens of copies, thus honouring the author, the University in which he worked, and the Lord who protected him (Giangaleazzo Visconti).

The Rule of Giangaleazzo Visconti, Until 1402

From 1385 to 1402, the years of Giangaleazzo Visconti's rule were, as it is well-known, the most fortunate in terms of the expansion of the Visconti state. As a result of the legitimacy and consolidation of the state, Giangaleazzo sought to gain recognition of the title of Duke from the Emperor. This recognition was obtained through Giangaleazzo's trusted adviser the Franciscan Pietro Filargo in Prague in 1395. The impressive ceremony of investiture took place in the Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan on 5 September 1395 in the presence of all the state dignitaries, the ecclesiastical authorities, and representatives of nearby states. A speech was delivered by Pietro Filargo that endowed the event with great symbolic significance (as yet unedited in ms Ambrosiano B 116 sup.).

¹⁸ *Almum Studium Papiense. I. Dalle origini all'età spagnola. I. Origini e fondazione dello "Studium Generale"*, ed. Dario Mantovani (Milan, 2012).

With regard to the relationship between centralised power and territories subject to it, Giangaleazzo intended to regulate them by means of specific degrees and statutes that were discussed and formulated at length by special commissions, which were politically and legally appointed both *in loco* and in the ducal court. This plan, that remained unbroken after the death of Giangaleazzo in 1402, was taken up in part by his son Filippo Maria Visconti at the start of the 1420s. Concrete expression of this political desire can be found in the drafting of a conspicuous number of statutes that differ from place to place according to pre-existing local traditions. The relevance of these documents lies primarily with the political and institutional history of the state, particularly the statutes of Milan, approved in 1396. In terms of book production, the large diffusion of manuscripts (and later incunabula and 16th-century books) containing a variety of statutes relevant to the different territories within the Visconti state, is of great cultural relevance, and also demonstrates the high level of political culture of that time.

The conquest of Padua in 1388 represents an important event: not least because it led to the confiscation of the library of the Carrara dynasty that included a large number of the books owned by Petrarch on his death (1374). These precious manuscripts became part of the Visconti library, which occupied a wing of the castle in Pavia (next to the archives and the reliquary). This conquest, amongst others, led to the Visconti library being the largest and most prestigious in Italy with a holding of 988 books at the death of Giangaleazzo, or, more specifically, at the time of the first recorded inventory dating to 1426.

It is understandable then, that despite the restrictions of access, a library of this dimension would have spurred on a new wave of Humanism in Pavia.¹⁹ The figurehead of this movement was undoubtedly Pasquino Capelli. Originally from Cremona, Capelli was an important chancellor of the Visconti state who, in the end, fell out of favour with the duke and was sentenced for (presumed) treason in 1398. He was a passionate collector of codices: for example in 1389 he commissioned the sumptuous illuminated edition of Pliny, now ms Ambrosiano E 24 sup., that also contained a postilla. He was also a friend and correspondent of Coluccio Salutati, chancellor of the Florentine Republic from 1375 to 1406. Spurred on by Florentine humanism, Capelli made the important philological discovery of a precious codex in the library at Vercelli in 1392. The codex dated from the 9th century and contained a complete edition of Cicero's *Familiares* (current ms Pluteo 49.9 in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence).

19 Luciano Gargan, "La cultura umanistica a Pavia in età viscontea", *Bollettino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria* 107 (2007), pp. 159–209.

Other Humanist figures can be identified alongside Capelli: Antonio Loschi, Uberto Decembrio, Giovanni Manzini della Motta and Giovanni De Bonis. The most emblematic artifact of this new wave of Viscontian humanism can be seen in the Latin translation of Plato's *Republic* that was undertaken by Manuele Crisolora and Uberto Decembrio (1400–1402). This is the first great example of a translation from Greek into Latin from a Humanist perspective, and of an authoritative text that lends itself to the justification of princely states.²⁰ The text with widest circulation was the *Inquisitio super orationes Ciceronis* by Antonio Loschi (1395), a commentary that accompanied the success of Cicero's orations throughout the 15th century, assuring rapid and long-lasting fame for the author.

Close to Giangaleazzo, there was also number of titular bishops representing the dioceses within the Duchy, who were highly influential politically, particularly with regard to the functioning of the Visconti system of power, in their role as diplomats. Again the figure of the Franciscan Pietro Filargo comes to the fore. Having studied theology at Oxford and Paris, Filargo was established in Pavia in 1381, then made bishop of Piacenza, of Viscontian Vicenza in 1388 and of Novara, lastly he was made archbishop of Milan in May 1402. A member of Giangaleazzo's secret council, he obtained the imperial title of duke for his Lord in Prague and led the coronation ceremony on 5 September 1395; on 12 June 1405 he was named cardinal, before being elected pope at the troubled Council of Pisa of 1409, and taking the name Alexander v. He held the title of pope for a very short time as by 3 May 1410 he died in Bologna. His many cultural virtues included his promotion of cultural initiatives (first and foremost the translation of Plato's *Republic*) and his protection of intellectuals.

Amongst the other bishops in the Visconti circle, another Franciscan, Guglielmo Centueri, advisor to the duke, lecturer in theology and bishop of Pavia from 1386, is worthy of note. In addition to writing a commentary on the fourth book of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, that was rich in contemporary references, Centueri wrote a treatise in Latin, *De iure monarchie*, completed in 1400. In this treatise, Centueri debates the best form of political regime, out of the system of republican government, as embodied by Florence, unable to promote peace and the well-being of its member, and the monarchic model that guarantees peace and stability, he has no doubt over the superiority of the latter. Thus, even in a work that from its premises is abstract and of a doctrinal

20 Franca Gusmini, "Le traduzioni della *Repubblica* platonica di Uberto e Pier Candido Decembrio: primi accertamenti testuali", *Filologia italiana* 9 (2012), pp. 77–108.

nature, he expresses, in a rather explicit way, his support for the regal investiture of Giangaleazzo, clearly with concession from the papal authorities.²¹

The Conflict with Florence and Antonio Loschi's *Invectiva in Florentinos*, 1401

The military expansion of the Visconti state continued towards the end of the 14th century: following the resounding victory at Alessandria (1391) and the submission of almost all of the Po Valley, Giangaleazzo also reached past the Apennines, annexing Pisa, Siena, Perugia, and tightened his grip around Florence

The reaction to this in both political and in cultural terms was to be expected. The chancellor of the Florentine Republic, Coluccio Salutati, on 25 May 1390, wrote a vibrant letter addressed to *Italicis*, that is, to Italians, so as to warn them against the tyrannical expansionism of the Visconti. The tensions were made worse by the Visconti chancellor Antonio Loschi (a pupil of Salutati) who, in the August of 1396 wrote a vigorous metric epistle, *Imperiose comes, seculi nova gloria nostri*, in celebration of the deeds of Giangaleazzo, and who, in 1401 launched a direct and bitter *Invectiva in Florentinos*. From Florence, a rebuttal came quickly from Cino Rinuccini with a *Risponsiva* of which only vernacularised versions have survived, and moreover, from Coluccio once more with an *Invectiva contra maledicum et obiurgatorem*, drafted over a longer time and completed in 1403, that is, after the death of Giangaleazzo in 1402, once the danger was over.²² Furthermore, Coluccio wrote as an extraordinary exception, in the vernacular, the anti-Visconti sonnet *O scacciato dal ciel da Micael*, which was responded to from the Visconti side with the sonnet *O Cleopatra, o madre d'Ismael*; Coluccio's poem written in hexameters against the Visconti coat of arms, *Cur tenet infantem coluber crudelis in ore*, Engiramo Bracchi replied from the Visconti side with another poem, *Infantem miserum coluber reputaverat ore*. These texts then variously spread through 15th-century miscellanies, clearly with different political views.²³

21 Barbara Baldi, "‘Pro tranquillo et pacifico statu humanae reipublicae’: Guglielmo Centucri fra religione e politica nell'età di Gian Galeazzo Visconti", in *The Languages of Political Society. Western Europe, 14th–17th Centuries*, eds. Andrea Gamberini, Jean-Philippe Genet, Andrea Zorzi (Rome, 2011), pp. 121–46.

22 Carla Maria Monti, "Il codice Visconti di Modrone 2", *Aevum* 32 (2008), pp. 849–81.

23 Stefano Ugo Baldassarri, *La vipera e il giglio: lo scontro tra Milano e Firenze nelle invettive di Antonio Loschi e Coluccio Salutati* (Rome, 2012).

With the sudden death of Giangaleazzo Visconti in 1402, the stand-off with Florence lost its political urgency, and Florence, no longer under the threat siege by the Visconti, was able to embark upon its remarkable first wave of civil Humanism, exemplified at the highest level, after the death of Salutati in 1406, by the figure of Bruni. Bruni had already released his *Laudatio Florentinae urbis* between 1403 and 1404, in the swell of the anti-Visconti polemic. The conflict between Milan and Florence, that is, between two opposing ideologies and mentalities, was to resume once more after the 1420s.

The Age of Filippo Maria Visconti (1402–1447)

Giangaleazzo died unexpectedly on 3 September 1402. His funeral was solemnly held in Milan on 20 October, the Augustinian Pietro da Castelletto gave a funeral oration of weighty political content.²⁴

The unity of the Visconti state began to crumble following his death and internal conflicts continued for a couple of decades. Eventually towards the beginning of the 1420s, Filippo Maria Visconti managed to recreate the stability of the state, albeit within more limited borders, whilst still fighting external wars. For this reason, between 1402 and 1421, the Visconti state experienced a dearth of cultural activity, with even the teaching activities of the University of Pavia being reduced to a minimum. It is of great significance, then, that Manuele Crisolora left Lombardy in 1402, followed by the departures of Antonio Loschi in 1406 and Gasparino Barzizza in 1407 whereas Uberto Decembrio, who continued in his role of secretary to the Visconti, was imprisoned between 1410 and 1418.

Only from around 1420, when the state was once more stabilised under Filippo Maria, could cultural activities resume once more. Hence, in 1421 Gasparino Barzizza returned to Lombardy from the Veneto and took up his previous teaching role in Milan and Pavia, and revised and then released his successful treatise on *Orthographia*; whilst at the same time, between 1421 and 1422 Uberto Decembrio, after his release from prison, wrote his treatise *De republica*, with a dedication to Filippo Maria.

The aged Barzizza and the aged Decembrio, despite being inherently different from each other, symbolize in the Lombardy of the 1420s, the last great

24 Alessandra Malanca, "I testi ufficiali per i funerali di Gian Galeazzo Visconti: il sermone di Pietro da Castelletto e l'*Ordo funeris*", in *L'antique, les arts, la littérature à la fin du Moyen Âge. Le cas de l'Italie du Nord*. Univ. de Lausanne, 24 May 2011, forthcoming conference proceedings.

representatives of the late 13th-century wave of Visconti Humanism. Within the space of a few years, these individuals, however, passed away (Uberto in 1427, Gasparino in 1430); their legacy was to be carried forward primarily by their own sons, in a form that had been decidedly updated to the new Humanism of the 15th century: Gasparino was succeeded by the very different (and lively) Guiniforte Barzizza, Uberto by his eldest son, Pier Candido Decembrio.

The University of Pavia also began its activities once more in the 1420s; Filippo Maria attentively sought to call in illustrious teachers from outside the state, for example, in medicine, Ugo Benzi, a doctor from Siena (1425), whilst in law, the most eminent name was Catone Sacco, who was also the author of a political treatise, *Semideus* (1435–1436). Humanist spheres also experienced a period of intense activity from 1430 to 1434, the years that Remigio Sabbadini defined the ‘glorious quinquennial’ of Pavian Humanism, stimulated in particular by the presence of Antonio Beccadelli, known as Panormita, and of Lorenzo Valla. In Pavia and Milan during that period there was a vibrant production of humanistic texts, comprising exchanges, disagreements, and disputes amongst scholars of note, including, along with those mentioned above: the Franciscan Antonio da Rho, Cosma Raimondi of Cremona (who committed suicide in 1436), Antonio Cremona, Antonio Pessina, Maffeo Vegio (who in 1436 left for Rome). In addition to this literary production, however on the fringes of academic life, we may add irreverent works such as the *Repetitio magistris Zanini coqui* by Ugolino Pisani, a parody of a degree ceremony, which was performed on 24 February 1435 (Maundy Thursday) in Pavia.

Despite disputes and setbacks, the Milanese authorities and their duke nevertheless continued to grow in prosperity and power, to the extent that from 1435 to 1440 the Visconti state established itself among the largest in Italy, reigniting Giangaleazzo’s hegemonic ambitions. The *De laudibus Mediolanensium urbis panegyricus* (1436) provides insight into that precise moment. In this treatise Pier Candido Decembrio explicitly presents the city as a *secunda Roma*: this work, however, did not take as its model the medieval panegyrics of Milanese tradition, but instead followed Leonardo Bruni’s *Laudatio Florentinae urbis* whose rhetorical form was entirely different, and clearly a humanist mould. At the same time, for the most erudite, Pier Candido Decembrio released a new Latin translation of Plato’s *Republic* that was also to be understood as the philosophical foundations of a princely state (1440). The conflict with Florence was thus renewed on a cultural level as well as on a political one. With the battle of Anghiari in 1440, however, came the definitive defeat of the Milanese, and the end of that hegemonic project.

Viscontian humanism was not limited to works in Latin; works in the vernacular were also present. The most important initiative in this respect was

the rendering of ancient history into the vernacular: a vernacular that was no longer grounded in dialect, but based on a literary Tuscan 'koinè', albeit with frequent phonetic inflections from the north of Italy, and with a notable presence of Latinisms.

In a princely regime such as that of the Visconti, it is understandable that the most important work was the series of the *Vite degli Imperatori Romani* (1431): a collection of 59 biographies based on the *Vitae Caesarum* by Suetonius, the *Historia Augusta*, and other sources. The text was circulated (in manuscripts of great splendor such as ms It. 131 in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, a copy dedicated to the duke containing miniatures of great beauty) without giving the name of the translator, however, the translator can be identified as Antonio da Rho.

Pier Candido Decembrio was the most prolific in dedicating himself to texts from ancient history: in 1438 he released a vernacularisation of Caesar's *De bello Gallico* and of *De bello civili*, including the pseudo-Caesarian appendices (dedicated to Filippo Maria), a vernacularisation of Quintus Curtius Rufus' *Historia Alexandri Magni*, and a vernacularisation of Bruni's *De primo bello Punico*. The first two works in particular became widely diffused over the 15th century, the second with an accompanying *Comparatione di Caio Iulio Cesare imperatore maximo e d'Alexandro Magno*, following the model of Plutarch.

Vernacular literature clearly enjoyed greater respect in the Milan of Filippo Maria Visconti than it did in other centres of the time. This can also be seen in the attempts made to appropriate the great texts of 14th-century Tuscan literature. Guiniforte Barzizza wrote a commentary to the *Inferno* in which he highlighted Dante's aversion to his fellow Florentines and his adherence to an inherently Ghibelline ideology. This codex (which contains lacunae) was also dedicated to the Visconti (current ms It. 2017 in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France), and was elaborately illuminated.

The exegetic itinerary on the works of Petrarch is more detailed. The doctor and astrologer Pietro Lapini worked on a commentary to the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, primarily for the duke and his court, from the 1430s (of which there is no manuscript evidence), both Pier Candido Decembrio and Guiniforte Barzizza worked on commentaries (of which only scant fragments remain), and finally Francesco Filelfo, whose commentary, dating from 1440s, extends to composition CXXXVI. It was easier, in the case of Petrarch, to lay claim to the extra-Florentine character of the intellectual and poet as he had lived under the Visconti's protection in Milan for many years.

Furthermore, at that time, from 1439, Filelfo was Filippo Maria's preferred intellectual. Amongst his works of the period, we find a *Commentationes Florentinae de exilio*, full of criticism of the Medici, dedicated to Vitaliano

Borromeo (1440), the *Convivia Mediolanensia*, dedicated to Tommaso Tebaldi (1443 or shortly after), and the *Satyrae*, began in 1431 and completed in 1449 after the death of Filippo Maria, and dedicated to Alfonso of Aragon.

Following the death of the duke, Pier Candido Decembrio wrote a *Vita Philippi Mariae Ligurum ducis*: a work rich in detailed information, but open to interpretation, pivoting between a celebration of his Lord and a veiled criticism, partially in accord with the period of the Ambrosian Republic.

The Age of Francesco (1450–1466) and Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1466–1476)

Following the turbulent hiatus that was the Ambrosian Republic (1447–1450), the new Lord, Francesco Sforza reinstated seigneurial rule that was internally stabilized and whose relations with other Italian powers were more balanced, in an Italian political landscape that, to a greater or lesser extent, had become more peaceful as a result of the Peace of Lodi (1454). Relations had improved particularly with Florence, for example, the Florentine architect Filarete was called to Milan and there he wrote between 1460 and 1465 his *Trattato di architettura*, which he dedicated firstly to Francesco Sforza and then to Piero di Cosimo de' Medici. Life in the Milanese court was also rejuvenated and courtly literature became established.

The name that dominated the cultural environment of Milan up until 1481, inherited from the previous period of Visconti rule, was Francesco Filelfo. Skilled in Greek, Latin, and the vernacular, highly adept in important interpersonal relations, and ready to intervene at any occasion he was needed (as the evidence of his epistles shows, many of these occasions were of great significance), Filelfo dedicated himself primarily to drafting his epic poem *Sphortias*, which was billed before its release as being the new *Iliad*: he released four books in 1455, another four in 1463, and continued into the ninth book which remains unfinished. Filelfo's epigrams for particular occasions, collected into the ten books of the *De iocis et seriis* in 1465, are more colourful, offering glimpses of life at court.²⁵

Filelfo's main rival, Pier Candido Decembrio, remained on the margins of court life. In 1462 he wrote his adulatory biography of Francesco Sforza in

25 Massimo Zaggia, "Indice del *De iocis et seriis* filelfiano", *Rinascimento*, n.s. 34 (1994), pp. 157–235. Such interesting intertwined relationships are discussed in Francesco Caglioti, "Francesco Sforza e il Filelfo, Bonifacio Bembo e 'compagni': nove prosopopee inedite per il ciclo di antichi eroi ed eroine nella corte ducale dell'Arengo a Milano (1456–61 circa)", *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 28 (1994), pp. 183–218.

Latin, *Adnotatio rerum gestarum in vita illustrissimi domini Francisci Sfortiae*, which was limited to the accomplishments of the duke as a young man. He did not manage, however, to gain entry into the higher levels of Sforza's circles. The beginnings of a trend for historiographical writings based on events of the recent past began to emerge, with the aim also of enforcing the legitimacy of the new dynasty. Firstly Antonio Minuti, a notary and chancellor to the Sforza family, wrote a *Compendio di gesti del magnanimo e gloriosissimo signore Sforza* (1458): a biography of Muzio Attendolo Sforza (1369–1424), father of Francesco, a straightforward exposition written in humble vernacular, with more of a secretarial tone than a literary one. The work that can be seen, at least in part, as the start of a historiography worthy of Humanism, was the *De vita rebusque gestis Francisci Sfortiae*, written in Latin prose by Lodrisio Crivelli, a Milanese noble man, highly educated in law, but also a Humanist, expert in Greek, and charged with many diplomatic missions for the duke. His work, however, remained unfinished at the second book, when he abandoned the work at the death of his father in 1424.²⁶ At a lower level, Antonio Cornazzano wrote the *Sforziade* (1459) in vernacular tercets distributed over twelve books; the success of this work was also limited.²⁷

The most important cultural innovation in the period of Galeazzo Maria's rule was the introduction the printing press in 1471, largely thanks to Antonio Zarotto, originally from Parma. In the space of a few years, Milan became one of the largest centres for typography in Italy. The records for 1500 show that in the era of incunables, Milan was the third largest typographic centre in Italy, after Venice and Rome. Editions of Latin classics prevail amongst printed texts, not least for their philological preservation (Bonaccorso Pisano and Gabriele Paveri Fontana stand out as curators, both of whom were pupils of Filelfo). In the field of vernacular literature, an early printed edition of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* dating from 1473 is of great importance, as is the 1477–78 edition of the *Commedia* with a commentary by Martino Paolo Nibia from Novara, based on the 14th-century commentary by Jacopo della Lana which can be seen as a final attempt to appropriate Dante's poem to Northern Italy.²⁸ Beyond the literary circles we can find, a printed edition of the *Missale Ambrosianum* from 1475, the first printed missal in Italy; an edition

26 Gary Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas: politics and propaganda in Fifteenth-Century Milan* (Oxford, 1988).

27 Roberto L. Bruni, Diego Zancani, *Antonio Cornazzano. La tradizione testuale* (Florence, 1992), pp. 21–27, 31–33.

28 Luca Carlo Rossi, "Per il commento di Martino Paolo Nibia alla *Commedia*", in *Filologia umanistica. Per Gianvito Resta*, eds. Vincenzo Fera, Giacomo Ferrai, 3 vols. (Padua, 1997), 3: pp. 1677–716.

of the statutes of Milan, approved in 1396, from 1480; and from 1477 or 1478 the *Sanctuarium* from that excellent Humanist Bonino Mombrizio, which gathers together 334 lives of saints written in Latin.

The summer of 1481 saw the definitive departure of the then elderly Filelfo for Florence (where he died on 31 July of the same year); this departure can be seen as the end of an era.

The Age of Ludovico il Moro (1480–1499)

A turning point can be seen in Milan in the years 1480 to 1481, with the execution of the duke's first secretary Cicco Simonetta (1480) and Ludovico il Moro's seizure of power and self-declaration as duke. A shift toward the Renaissance also occurred in the arts, even after Filarete, Foppa, the Scolari, and various others: the Prevedari engraving (1481) taken from work by Bramante, can readily be seen as the initial act in this new phase, whose most illustrious names are those of Bramante and Leonardo. In terms of literary output, Milan under Ludovico il Moro, was celebrated as a new Athens: it must not be forgotten, however, that the splendour of the court of Ludovico il Moro shone out in terms of arts, and much less in terms of letters.²⁹

In terms of book production the point of departure can be seen in the print of the *Commentarii rerum gestarum Francisci Sfortiae* (undated, but from 1482 or 1483) meticulously prepared (based on the model of the *Commentarii* of Caesar) by Giovanni Simonetta, brother of Cicco Simonetta (for which he was incarcerated at the end of the 1470s). As the author was unable to oversee the printing, Francesco Puteolano saw to this, introducing a few modifications, relating for the most part to political evaluations. The celebration of Francesco, progenitor of the new dynasty, was very dear to Ludovico, who ordered a vernacularisation of that central text. For the translation of the work, Ludovico's new ally Lorenzo the Magnificent recommended the Florentine intellectual Cristoforo Landino. Landino's vernacular edition of the *Sforziada* was printed in Milan in 1490, prefaced by a solemn celebration of the Florentine language as the rightful vernacular of Italy (ff. 1r–2r). This Milanese work, translated by a Florentine and printed in Milan, is of crucial historical importance, as the sumptuous decoration of its many extant exemplars attest (some also in parchment).

Local historiography, seen primarily as a historical legitimization of the duchy, held the highest repute at court (in which, for that matter, men such as

29 Carlo Dionisotti, *Appunti su arti e lettere* (Milan, 1995) pp. 13–50.

Bartolomeo Calco and Iacopo Antiquario, endowed with excellent Humanist preparation, had become secretaries). The summons to Milan from Venice in 1481 of Giorgio Merula, from Alessandria, is of great significance. Merula was an esteemed philologist, but he was tasked by the Sforzas in 1483 to prepare an historic work on the Visconti. During the research fostered by Merula, in 1493 a number of ancient texts were found in the Benedictine library at Bobbio that had been hitherto unknown.³⁰ Merula worked on the *Historia Vicecomitum* (following the model of Livy) until his death in 1494: in all he had managed to complete fourteen books, from the origins of the city until the rule of Azzone. On Merula's death, Tristano Calco was entrusted with the continuation of the work; however neither was Calco able to see this work published during his lifetime. Instead, in 1492, Donato Bossi released the rather more modest *Chronica Bossiana*, chronicles written in Latin and in the traditional system of writing annals.

In contrast, the poetry of the time, that found expression within the court, was of much less worth. The most emblematic expression, even in its modest level of quality, can be seen in the 1493 collection of *Rime* composed by the Florentine Bernardo Bellincioni. In the rather crowded spectrum, made up of for the most part of nobles who wrote in verse (but also some outsiders such as Galeotto del Carretto and Nicolò da Correggio), the figure of Gaspare Ambrogio Visconti who died at the age of 38 in 1499 stands out. Visconti was the author of a number of texts including amongst the most noteworthy the *Historia de Paulo e Daria amanti* printed in 1495 in which he adapted the structure of narrative poetry in octaves to the local environment. The work tells a love story set in 14th-century Milan, but contains interesting references to the current times (particularly in the marginal postillae).³¹ The court of Ludovico was open to satirical poetry, even jocular and parodic poetry, and, for the first time, examples of poetry in dialect can be found (Lancino Curti, also the author of sonnets in Italian).³² In parallel, the tradition of Latin poetry continued with authors like Giovanni Biffi, Piattino Piatti, and Lancino Curti.

30 Mirella Ferrari, "Le scoperte a Bobbio nel 1493: vicende di codici e fortuna di testi", *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 13 (1970), pp. 139–80.

31 In ISTC, iv00266000. In 1493, Visconti published the *Rithimi* and the *Transito del Carnevale*: in ISTC, iv00265500 e iv00266100. Cf. Edoardo Rossetti, "Ritratti di baroni in città e vedute urbane in campagna. Un inedito inventario di Gaspare Ambrogio Visconti (1499)", in *Squarci d'interni. Inventari per il Rinascimento milanese*, ed. Edoardo Rossetti (Milan, 2012), pp. 71–100.

32 Fabio Marri, "Lingua e dialetto nella poesia giocosa ai tempi del Moro", in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1983), 1: pp. 231–92.

Theatrical works are also of interest: outside the court the 14th-century tradition of performances on the occasion of the periodic oblations to support the *fabbrica* of the cathedral continued (no surviving manuscripts exist for these performances); whilst within the court, memorable courtesan parties were held, such as the performance of *Paradise*, staged on 13 January 1490, directed by Leonardo da Vinci. In intellectual terms, many important plays from the classical Latin tradition were performed, such as the works of Plautus. There were also theatrical productions of notable quality such as the *Pasitea* by Gaspare Ambrogio Visconti (1495–1498) or the *Danae* by Baldassarre Taccone, shown on 31 January 1496 at the house of GiovanFrancesco Sanseverino, directed by da Vinci.

Philological studies were also important: in addition to Merula, mentioned above, the noble competition with Florence led to Demetrius Chalcondyles being called to Milan in order to resurrect the tradition of teaching Greek there. In Florence, Chalcondyles had printed his authoritative edition of Homer (1488), in Milan, he had printed, amongst other works, his *Erotemata* in 1493 and the Suda *Lexicon Graecum*, that *summa* of all Byzantine thought. In the 1490s, Chalcondyles' presence in Milan made the city the greatest centre in Italy for the study of ancient Greek, alongside Messina under the tutelage of Constantine Lascaris.

Milanese culture from the second half of the 15th century was almost exclusively a court culture, with very little remaining from outside that environment. In Pavia, however, the University's activities continued to prosper with the institution increasingly attracted students from the whole of Northern Europe. Amongst the lecturers at that time, we note Giovanni Marliani in medicine, and Giasone del Maino in law, who was also an esteemed orator in contact with the Sforza and later the French. A curious document pertains to that time, printed by Zarotto in 1488, this *Letilogia* composed in octaves, is a form of 'triumph of death' written about the plague of 1485, signed by Bettino da Trezzo.

In 1496, the Fransiscan Luca Pacioli moved to Milan. Pacioli had a passion for mathematics (in 1494 in Venice, he published a *Summa de arithmetica*), and rapidly entered into the court environment, where he became friends with da Vinci. In 1498 he released his vernacular treatise *De divina proportione* which circulated in manuscript form amongst members of the court. At the fall of Ludovico il Moro in 1499, Pacioli along with his friend da Vinci, left Milan, firstly for Mantua, then Venice, and then Florence. He published an extended version of this treatise in 1509, in Venice, printed by Paganino Paganini which featured outstanding illustrations of polyhedra drawn by da Vinci. That edition, found in fol. 7r–v, recalls a memory of Ludovico and the intellectuals of his court: a memory, that was, however, distant.

The Years of French Domination and of the 'Italian Wars', 1499–1535

As early as the 16th-century, it had become customary to see in the defeat of Ludovico il Moro in 1499 and in the first French conquest (1499–1512, and later 1516–1521), the sudden collapse not only of the Duchy of Milan, but also of the court culture inherent to the Sforza rule. Despite this view, in terms of book production, a remarkable continuity can be seen with regard to the previous era: of course, in an environment that lacked a privileged place for the promotion and fruition of culture that the court of Ludovico il Moro had been. Furthermore, in their desire to seek support amongst the noble Lombard families (Trivulzio, Pallavicini), the populations of the towns, and professional corporations, the French governors were careful to exhibit behavior that was, on the whole, not despotic (at least until governor Lautrec 1517–1521). The fact that the French language was not imposed on the higher echelons of society is also relevant, and no book was printed in French in Milan throughout the period of French rule. If anything, there were records of public orations in French by the transalpine rulers.³³

The editorial journey travelled by the Milanese statutes is of interest: the draft was approved in 1396 and later printed in 1480; then, Ludovico il Moro called for a revision of the statutes, this revision was partially achieved in 1498 with the publication, approved by Sforza, of the civil statutes only. Work on the statutes did not cease on the fall of the Duchy, and three years later, in 1502, a new complete draft of the statutes was sent for printing with the approval of King Louis XII. The printer was Alessandro Minuziano: already established in the late 15th century, Minuziano became the centre of the cultural life of Milan in the first two decades of the 16th century, not just as a printer, but also as an editor, a catalyst for culture, and a polemist. More than any other figure, Minuziano gives the clearest impression of a process of change from the age of the Sforza to the rule of the French that was substantially painless.

Amongst his achievements as an editor, Minuziano edited the posthumous edition of Giorgio Merula's *De antiquitate Vicecomitum* (1499 or 1500). At the same time, Tristano Calco, already charged by Ludovico il Moro to continue the work of Merula, continued with his *Historia patria*, which, however, remained unedited at the death of the author in 1514–1515. Most importantly, Minuziano printed Bernardino Corio's *Mediolanensis patria historia* in 1503, the first

33 Raymund Wilhelm, "Regionale Sprachgeschichte als Geschichte eines mehrsprachigen Raumes. Perspektiven einer Sprachgeschichte der Lombardei", in *Mit Clío im Gespräch. Romanische Sprachgeschichten und Sprachgeschichtsschreibung*, eds. Jochen Hafner, Wulf Oesterreicher (Tübingen, 2007), pp. 77–101.

history of Milan to be written directly in the vernacular, dedicated to Ascanio Sforza, the brother of Ludovico il Moro (who was, at the time, a prisoner in France).³⁴ In general, many Milanese editions from the early 16th century, when printing works dating from the previous era of the Sforza, were careful to introduce prudent adjustments into the dedications or eulogies, nonetheless, in fact what they did was to bring to completion the lineage of the previous era.

During the era of French rule, therefore, Latin poetry of the major intellectuals of the Sforza era were printed: the large collection of *Epigrammata* by Piattino Piatti, printed by Minuziano in 1502; more texts by Giovanni Biffi were printed between 1511 and 1516; and in 1521, the vast collections of *Sylvae* and *Epigrammata* by Lancino Curti were printed.

Production of vernacular poetry was slight, the most noteworthy name being Antonio Fileremo Fregoso, who had grown up under Sforza rule: he was the author of the poems *Riso di Heraclito* (1505) and *Pianto di Democrito* (1507), composed in tercets and known also as *I doi filosofi*. These poems were translated into French (1547) and Castilian (1554). In addition, Fregoso wrote a poem in octaves, entitled *La cerva bianca* (1510). Some of the lesser publications on historical events are of interest,³⁵ and religious writing also provides some interesting results, particularly the work of the Dominican Isidoro Isolani, and a number of vernacular publications popular within the sphere of the Observance movements.³⁶

Typographic production in Milan in 1521 can be considered as representing a phase that continued to be culturally productive. This can be best illustrated in the printing of Vitruvius' *translato commentato et raffigurato da Caesare Caesariano*, in Como, containing 119 engravings: in this abundant comment, ancient culture merges with the culture from the more recent past. The printing of the monumental collection of poems by Lancino Curti, mentioned above, also signifies in some way both the pinnacle and the conclusion of the long period of Humanistic poetry in Milan. Furthermore, the EDIT XVI

34 In EDIT XVI, Cnce 13302. Cf. Stefano Meschini, *Uno storico umanista alla corte sforzesca. Biografia di Bernardino Corio* (Milano, 1995).

35 An important text in this regard is (Cnce 14877) studied by Letizia Arcangeli, "Mais où sont les neiges d'antan ? Armonie perdute nel *Dialogo dil lamento di Vigieven* di Simone Colli", *Viglevanum* 22 (2012), pp. 10–17.

36 For instance, the late 14th-century treatise *De conformitate vitae beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Iesu* by Bartolomeo da Pisa (in EDIT XVI, Cnce 4488) was printed in 1510: Edoardo Rossetti, "Una questione di famiglie. Lo sviluppo dell'Osservanza francescana e l'aristocrazia milanese (1476–1516)", in *Fratres de Familia. Gli insediamenti dell'Osservanza minoritica nella penisola italiana (sec. XIV–XV)*, eds. Letizia Pellegrini, Gian Maria Varanini (Verona, 2012), pp. 111–65; pp. 124, 157–58.

(National survey of the Italian editions of the 16th century) entries for 1521 in Milan, show that no less than 39 works were printed across the various genres.

It is, at the same time, important to recognise that Milan at the beginning of the 16th century was not producing original texts, as was the case in other Italian centres, such as Naples (*Arcadia* by Sannazzaro, reprinted in Milan in 1509), Venice (*Asolani* by Bembo, reprinted in Milan in 1517), or Ferrara, Mantua, Urbino, Florence, and Rome (where a number of illustrious names including Ariosto, Machiavelli, and Castiglione worked at various times). In other words, it is necessary to acknowledge that, notwithstanding the liveliness of its cultural fabric, Milan in the 16th century was producing less originality than other centres of the Italian Renaissance.

In November 1521 the French were ousted from Milan and Francesco II Sforza was nominated duke. The tremulous restoration of the Sforza dynasty lasted until 1535, however, these were years of profound crisis linked to wars, pestilence, and famine. Significantly, whilst in Pavia the renowned jurist Giasone del Maino died in 1519, the previous year, in 1518, Andrea Alciato, a rising star in the fields of law and philosophy, accepted an invitation to move to Avignon where he taught for many years before moving to the University of Bourges in 1529, fostering all the while excellent relations with scholars throughout Europe. In 1531 the first edition of Alciato's *Emblemata* was published in Augsburg, which was then revised and extended in the 1534 Paris edition (and again in 1546 and in 1550). The *Emblemata* became one of the most successful books of the century throughout Europe, numbering 170 editions. Alciato, who was always qualified as *Mediolanensis* on the frontispieces of his works, represents a typology of Milanese intellectuals from the 16th century who found fame away from home.

The most striking expression from the last era of Sforza rule, can be found in the *Commentarii de rebus nuper in Italia gestis* by Galeazzo Flavio Capella, secretary to and ambassador of Francesco II, to whom he dedicates his work: a sombre exposition of the wars of 1521 and 1530 written in Latin. This work was soon translated into Spanish (1536), German (1539), and Italian (1539, Venice).

The period from 1521 to 1535 represents a time of profound crisis for Milan, and also the end of an epoch, also in cultural terms. The words of Ortensio Lando, an eccentric literary figure, born and raised in Milan but active outside his birthplace, are useful in this respect. In his *Commentario delle più notabili e mostruose cose d'Italia et altri luoghi* (1548) he presents the city in the following way:

Milano, qual mi dicevano esser una città grande, popolosa e molto ricca, prima che Francia, Spagna et Alemagna li succhiassero non solo il latte,

ma il sangue.³⁷ [Milan, they told me it was a great, populous, and rich city before France, Spain, and Germany sucked away not only its milk, but also its blood.]

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37 Ed. 1548, fol. 3r. In his *Forcianae questiones* of 1535 (Naples, Martino da Ragusa, probably from Lyon, by the Trechsel brothers, p. 15) Lando had already expressed his opposition towards Charles V as new lord of Milan: "Olim splendidissime vestiebant Mediolanenses, sed postquam Carolus Caesar in eam urbem tetram et monstruosam bestiam immisit, ita consumpti et exhausti sunt, ut vestimentorum splendorem omnium maxime oderint".

Seminario internazionale per i centenari di Coluccio Salutati e Lorenzo Valla, Bergamo, 25–26 October 2007, ed. Luca Carlo Rossi (Florence, 2010), pp. 3–125.

Abbreviations

- DBI *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Roma, 1960–ss.).
- EDIT XVI *Edit 16. Censimento nazionale delle edizioni italiane del secolo XVI*, available at <http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it>.
- ISTC *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue*, available at <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc>.

Culture in Lombardy, 1535–1706

Massimo Zaggia

Culture in Milan under the Spanish Rule: The Era of Charles v and Phillip II

Following the death of Francesco II Sforza on 2 November 1535, the duchy became incorporated into the Empire of Charles v, who named governors to control the state; and in 1556, the state passed to Phillip II, king of Spain (who, as a prince, had already sojourned in Milan between 1548 and 1549, celebrated in some printed publications). Early governors of note include Alfonso d'Avalos, governor from 1538 to 1546, and Ferrante Gonzaga, governor from 1546 to 1555. Charles v was in Milan in 1541, at which time he approved the new *Constitutiones domini Mediolanensis*: which were immediately praised throughout Europe for their juridical rigour, and remained in force until the eighteenth century.

In the 1540s, the governor Avalos was particularly receptive to culture and art (note the exceptional portrait of him by Titian, now in the Prado Museum), and under him a cultural recovery began. The various editorial activities undertaken by brothers Andrea and Francesco Minizio Calvo, 1541–1542 and 1539–1541 respectively (and earlier in 1520–1521) provide a useful record of this phase. Within a very varied production, some titles show attention given to the religious debate: primarily the *Adhortatio ad concordiam* by the Benedictine Isidoro da Chiari, dedicated to Cardinal Gaspare Contarini, an outstanding yet unheeded appeal for dialogue with the protestant counterpart.¹

In the meantime, however, the religious situation throughout Europe had become more rigid, particularly in Spanish dominions. The Milanese Senate, as a result, issued a decree dated 18 December 1538, dictated by the Dominican Melchiorre Crivelli, condemning 44 titles as heretical. Later on, in 1554, a definitive *Index librorum prohibitorum* was printed in Milan (and contemporaneously with very few differences in Venice and Florence), compiled for the most part on the advice of the Curia in Rome, who condemned around six hundred entries.² Shortly afterwards, the official *Index* approved by Paul IV appeared

1 Ed. Marco Cavarzere (Rome, 2008).

2 In EDIT XVI Cnce 58302; Jesús Martínez de Bujanda, *Index des livres interdits*, 11 vols. (Geneva, 1985–2002), 3: pp. 113–43, 210–371, 377–79, 424–39.

in 1559 imposing new regulations for the written word on the entire Catholic world.

With regard to literature, the author most protected by Avalos was Giovanni Alberto Albicante. Albicante wrote various poems in vernacular octaves that celebrated contemporary battles, he also entered into a rather polemical exchange, with Aretino and with Doni. Though subordinate to the more culturally advanced cities, in this way, Milan was able to take part in the ongoing cultural and literary debates of the time.³ At the same time, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* was reprinted in Milan in 1539, following the second edition (1521), still relatively linked to the Po valley in language, and not the third (1532), completely Tuscanised. These editions combined with the frequent editions of Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* demonstrate an attachment to a literary tradition of the Po valley, despite it being mediated through its Tuscan makeover undertaken by Berni.

Furthermore, since the fashion for *Accademie* was flooding through the rest of Italy, an academy was also established in Milan in 1546, the *Accademia dei Trasformati*, and in 1552 came the addition of the *Accademia dei Fenici*.⁴ The *Accademia dei Trasformati* produced a printed collection of *Sonetti* in 1548, by twelve different authors. This collection was an important milestone in terms of Milan's participation in the thriving poetic tradition of the sixteenth century. Later milestones were the publication in 1551 of Girolamo Muzio's *Rime diverse* (despite it being printed in Venice), then in 1560, the *Rime* of Luca Contile, followed by those of Giuliano Goselini in 1572 (and later in 1588).

Girolamo Muzio, a prolific scholar originally from the Veneto, moved to Milan between 1540 and 1542, under Avalos' governorship, he also affiliated himself with Ferrante later but he moved around between different towns. In Milan he printed his *Polvere del Muzio*, a brief moral treatise (with an edition also in octaves) dedicated to the wife of Avalos, and a *Discorso intorno alle controversie che hora si trattano nella Chiesa di Dio*, with which he began his intense activity as a religious polemicist, in defense of the Church of Rome.⁵

Luca Contile, originally from Siena, also affiliated himself with Avalos from 1542 and later with Ferrante Gonzaga (until 1551). He wrote two plays for Ferrante, *La Pescara* and *La Cesarea Gonzaga* (1551). Later, following a decade

3 Raymund Wilhelm, "Ein mailändischer Intellektueller im Dienste Spaniens. Zur Sprache der politischen Propaganda Giovanni Alberto Albicantes", in *Villes aux croisées des langues*, eds. Mercedes Blanco, Roland Béhar (Geneva, forthcoming).

4 Simone Albonico, "Profilo delle Accademie letterarie milanesi del Cinquecento", in *Rabisch. Il grottesco nell'arte del Cinquecento. L'Accademia della Val di Blenio, Lomazzo e l'ambiente milanese*, eds. Giulio Bora, Manuela Kahn-Rossi, Francesco Porzio (Milan, 1998), pp. 101–10.

5 Marco Faini, "Muzio, Girolamo", in *DBI* 77 (2012), pp. 614–18.

of pilgrimages, he settled in Pavia as Commissioner of Valuation where he published the *Historia de' fatti di Cesare Maggi*, in 1564, written about a lieutenant of Avalos, and a collection of *Lettere*.⁶

Neither was Giuliano Goselini of local origin (he was schooled in Rome). Goselini was secretary to Ferrante Gonzaga, and in the 1570s he withdrew almost completely from political life. In addition to his *Rime*, he also produced an excellent and highly successful *Vita* of Ferrante Gonzaga (1575), rich with detailed first hand information.⁷

The literary production of Renato Trivulzio was never transmitted in printed form. Trivulzio was an aristocrat who took pleasure in composing poetry that became very successful: his poems, on various themes, and in various genres, are transmitted in the ms Ambrosiano v 24 sup. (which may have been the preparatory copy for printing) and constitute the pinnacle of poetic composition from the first half of the sixteenth century in Milan.⁸

The traditions of historiography and Latin poetry also proceeded in parallel. Gaudenzio Merula, for example, was active at that time. A relatively marginal figure in regard to the cultural school of thought of the time, perhaps for his religious ideas that tended towards anticlericalism, Merula published, amongst other works, a dialogue *De Gallorum Cisalpinorum antiquitate ac origine*, first in 1536 and again in Lyon in 1538, and his *Memorabilium liber*, published in 1546 again in Lyon (and, it would appear, later in Venice). In terms of Latin poetry, Aurelio Albuzio, author of a new *Heroides* inspired by Christianity (1542), stands out. The *Christias*, however, an epic poem written in Latin hexameter by Girolamo Vida, was not well received in Milan. Printed in Cremona in 1535, and then many times in Italy and Europe, this work did not find success in Milan; however, in Pavia in 1569 a commentary on the work was released by Bartolomeo Botta.

In this period, Paolo Giovio, a historian from Como well-connected in papal Rome under Clement VII and then Paul III, re-established contact with Lombardy and, from 1537 to 1543 with the consent of Avalos, organised the construction of his private *Musaeum* on the banks of Lake Como, in which he was to amass his collection of portraits. He lived there permanently only between 1537 and 1538, and then until the end of the 1540s (before travelling to the

6 Luca Contile da Cetona all'Europa. *Atti del seminario di studi, Cetona 20–21 ottobre 2007*, ed. Roberto Gigliucci (Manziana, 2009).

7 Simone Albonico, "Descrizione delle *Rime* di Giuliano Goselini", in *Studi di filologia e letteratura italiana offerti a Luigi Poma*, ed. Franco Gavazzeni (Rome-Padua, 2003), pp. 3–55.

8 Simone Albonico, *Il ruginoso stile: poeti e poesia in volgare a Milano nella prima metà del Cinquecento* (Milan, 1990), pp. 13–180.

Florence under Cosimo de' Medici, where he died in 1552). His scarce writings on the question of Lombardy are interesting more for their style than for their historical record (gleaned as they were from previous sources). They were, however, published outside Milan: the *Vita Sfortiae* (Muzio Attendolo Sforza) was published in Rome in 1539 (and later translated by Ludovico Domenichi in 1549), and the *Vitae duodecim Vicecomitum* was published in Paris in 1549 (and immediately translated by Ludovico Domenichi in 1549).

A largely autonomous figure with regard to geographical limitations can be found in Andrea Alciato. Alciato became a renowned jurist at the universities of Avignon and Bourges and his literary fame spread throughout Europe with his *Emblemata* (1531), he was, nonetheless, *Mediolanensis*. He was, therefore, called back to Pavia in 1533 in order to re-establish the prestige of the University; however in 1537 he left for Bologna, and later Ferrara. Only in 1546, and at the behest of the Emperor, did he return to Pavia where he practised until his death in 1550. His works on law, on philosophy, and on other erudite arguments are numerous; however, he always had his work printed outside Milan, preferably in Basle or Lyon. He does, however, express his link with his Milanese origins, as well as in a notable collection of epigraphs from his youth, in his work *Rerum patriae libri quattuor*, a work that covers the history of Milan from its origins to the era of Valentinian. This work, however, remained unpublished and was only printed in 1625.

Another scholar who does not form part of the mainstream, is the doctor Girolamo Cardano. Within his rather eventful biography, the periods of calm were those teaching at the University of Pavia; from 1543 to 1551, and later from 1559 to 1562. It is interesting to note that, over the course of the sixteenth century, very few of his works were published in Milan, in fact, only two from 1538 and 1539: the *Supplementum Almanach* with the *De restitutione temporum et motuum coelestium* and the voluminous *Practica arithmeticae*. What is more, on the frontispiece of these two Milanese editions is a portrait of the author with the writing *Nemo propheta acceptus in patria*. From 1539 onwards the much debated works of Cardano, who was always described as *Mediolanensis* on the frontispieces, were always published outside Milan.

Returning to literature, the printed edition of a large selection of *Novelle* by Matteo Bandello in 1560 is worthy of note. The first edition was printed in Lucca in 1554 whilst the author was in France, however, this partial reprint, expanded with their 'moral meaning' added to each novella by the scholar Ascanio Centorio degli Ortensi, is of particular significance as the majority of the novella are set in Milan or Pavia with references to real places and people.

Moving away from literature, we find some manuals aimed at teaching people to read, and at explaining the practical demands of merchants: the

Luminario da imparare a scrivere in 1536, the *Specchio del mercatante* in 1542, and the *Compendio utilissimo di quelle cose le quali a nobili e cristiani mercanti appartengono* in 1561.⁹ These works attest to the creation, albeit in an embryonic stage, of a literate middle class beyond the echelons of the nobility and intellectual elite.

The Era of Carlo and Federico Borromeo: Book Production

Carlo Borromeo, elected cardinal by his uncle pope Pius IV in 1563, was nominated archbishop of Milan on 12 May 1564 and on 23 September 1565 his formal entry into the diocese took place. From that day until his death on 3 November 1584, he was the catalyst for a period of intense activity, conducted with rigour and rigidity, and not without opposition, inspired primarily by the aim of zealously applying the decrees of the Council of Trent, yet characterized by a desire to charitably guide popular devotion.

Carlo Borromeo had a tremendously profound influence over the religious, political, and cultural life of Milan, toward general compliance with the directives of the Counter-Reformation. In terms of cultural initiatives, with the intention of updating the education of the clergy and the lay ruling class, he supported many institutions: the Maggiore Seminary, the College of Brera, entrusted to the Jesuits, the Helvetic College, the College of the Nobles, and the Borromeo College in Pavia. The mark he left on the cultural life of the city and of the diocese cannot be underestimated and continues to this day.

With regards to literary accomplishments, the works that can be seen as the summit of that era were, first and foremost, the monumental *Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*, released firstly in 1582, and then in an extended edition in 1599. These acts collect the ecclesiastical legislation imposed firstly by Carlo, and then later by his cousin Federico. The work was taken up as a model by many dioceses in Italy and in Europe. In 1577 the *Instructionum fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae libri duo* was printed, containing the updated regulations pertaining to the construction and decoration of churches; in 1589 the *Rituale Sacramentorum* was printed, and in 1594 the new *Missale Ambrosianum*, which was later re-edited in 1609 with further alterations.

In terms of vernacular works, that is to say, works that were more accessible to popular devotion, works by Carlo Borromeo include, in addition to

9 In EDIT XVI Cnce 57891, 58079 e 29206. These texts are highlighted by Paolo Bongrani, Silvia Morgana, "La Lombardia", in *L'italiano nelle regioni. Lingua nazionale e identità regionali*, ed. Francesco Bruni, 2 vols. (Turin, 1992–94), 1: pp. 84–142, esp. p. 110 (section by S. Morgana).

dozens of pastoral letters, and printed notices and *istruzioni*, the *Libretto dei ricordi del popolo della città e diocesi di Milano* in 1577; the *Memoriale al suo diletto popolo della città e diocesi di Milano*, in 1579, that gathers together the sermons from 20, 23, and 25 January 1578, with the addition in pages 421–502 of the *Libro di Salviano vescovo di Marsiglia contra gli spettacoli et altre vanità del mondo*; and the *Costitutioni e regole della Compagnia e Scuole della Dottrina Christiana* in 1585.¹⁰

The solemn funeral rites of Carlo Borromeo took place on 7 November 1584: the funeral oration was given by Francesco Panigarola, the most esteemed preacher of the day.¹¹ The hagiographic cult began immediately afterwards: the hagiography written by the cardinal and bishop of Verona, Agostino Valier, was issued in Latin and in the vernacular in 1587; in 1592 that of Carlo Bascapè, a Barnabite and secretary to Carlo Borromeo, written in Latin but soon translated into Italian and many other languages. Amongst the later biographies, the 1610 publication by Giovanni Pietro Giussani stands out. Devout literature, in the distinct and rigorous formalization of the Counter Reformation, intensified once more following the canonisation of Carlo Borromeo in 1610.

Ten years after the death of his cousin, on 27 August 1595, Federico Borromeo took up office as archbishop of Milan. One year later, Carlo Bascapè dedicated his treatise *De metropoli Mediolanensi* to him; he was also dedicated the *Historia pontificale di Milano* drafted by a layman, Giovanni Francesco Besozzi, the first vernacular history of the archbishops of Milan. Federico, who led the archdiocese for 36 years, continued in the same direction as his cousin, strengthening the cultural policy. In this field, his greatest initiative was establishing the Ambrosiana library in 1609 which was endowed with an extraordinary literary holdings, making it immediately one of the richest libraries of the time, second only to the Vatican libraries. The Collegio degli Alunni and the Collegio Trilingue were linked to the library so as to equip clergy with excellent levels in Latin, Greek, and in the vernacular. The innovation of teaching in the vernacular is significant and was seen by Federico Borromeo primarily in the teaching of Tuscan literary language.

Federico Borromeo was also a prolific writer, to the extent that he can be considered as the most important Milanese writer of the first half of the seventeenth century, alongside Ripamonti. From 1616 onwards, Federico published extensively, predominantly in Latin, for example: the *De extaticis*

¹⁰ In EDIT XVI Cnce 77087, 9557 e 15588.

¹¹ Giovanni Pozzi, "Intorno alla predicazione del Panigarola", in *Problemi di vita religiosa in Italia nel Cinquecento* (Padua, 1960), pp. 315–322, Rita Bramante, "Il predicatore di Francesco Panigarola", *Studia Borromaeica* 21 (2007), pp. 291–306.

mulieribus et illulis (1616), on female mysticism, the *De actione contemplationis* (1621), the *Cypria sacra sive de honestate et decoro ecclesiastici moris* (1628), an etiquette book of kinds for ecclesiastics. His works in the vernacular were less numerous: the *Vita* on Saint Catherine of Siena (1618), the *Trattato del disprezzo delle delizie* (1624), the *Tre libri de' piaceri della mente cristiana* (1625, 1629), *L'Idiota* (1626), and other posthumous publications, amongst which the *Laudi divine* stand out for their literary worth.¹² He also discussed sacred art in *De pictura sacra* (1624), and politics in *De gratia principum* (1625, 1632). An indefatigable preacher, his style varied according to whom he was addressing, he organised his sermons with a view to publishing them, this publication, however, was undertaken posthumously from 1632 to 1640 in four volumes with the title *Sacri ragionamenti*, and can be considered a monument to seventeenth century sacred oratory.¹³

Federico died on 21 September 1631, and the *Oratione* given at his funeral by the Theatine Paolo Aresi was immediately printed.¹⁴ Numerous biographies followed, despite no moves being made for his sanctification: the most important is the *Vita di Federico Borromeo* by Francesco Rivola, printed in 1656. The most famous depiction of Federico is the one sketched in Chapter XXII of Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi*.

The Plagues of 1576 and 1630 in the Publications of the Time

The time of Carlo and Federico Borromeo were also marked by two great epidemics of the plague, one in 1576 (called the plague of San Carlo) and the other in 1629–30 (the plague described by Manzoni in the *Promessi Sposi*). The self-abnegation of both archbishops in these terrible times is noteworthy. In 1630, Federico even wrote a treatise *De pestilentiali*, which, however, remained incomplete at the prelate's death.¹⁵

In terms of literary production, it is important to note that both epidemics gave rise to a proliferation of printed publications. In addition to announcements and printed warnings that document the dramatic unfolding of events,

12 Alessandro Martini, *I tre libri delle laudi divine di Federico Borromeo: ricerca storico-stilistica* (Padua, 1975).

13 Marzia Giuliani, *Il vescovo filosofo. Federico Borromeo e "I sacri ragionamenti"* (Florence, 2007).

14 Erminia Ardissino, *Il barocco e il sacro. La predicazione del teatino Paolo Aresi tra letteratura, immagini e scienza* (Vatican City, 2001).

15 The text, transmitted in ms Ambrosiano F 20 inf., was edited in 1932, and more recently edited by Armando Torno (Milan, 1998).

there were medical texts, historical documentary texts, religious texts, and even legal texts (for the trial and condemnation of the *untori* in 1630).

With regard to the plague of 1576, we can recall the *Vera narrazione del successo della peste che afflisce l'inclita città di Milano l'anno 1576* by the notary Giacomo Filippo Besta, printed in 1578, and written in the style of unembellished chronicles. A direct account comes from fra' Mattia da Salò (whose name was actually Paolo Bellintani), who led a group of Capuchin monks appointed on 21 October 1576 to manage the activities of the leper hospital in Milan: his *Dialogo sulla peste* clarifies the directing principles of that experience.¹⁶

Ludovico Settala, an excellent doctor, put his experience of the 1576 plague in his youth to good use in his treatise *De peste et pestiferis affectibus* printed in 1622. In 1628 he was nominated State Professor of Medicine, and in 1629 he printed in the vernacular the *Cura locale de' tumori pestilenziali*. He was, indeed, one of the first to recognize the signs of the new pestilence, and he himself was infected. His sons Senatore and Manfredo followed him in his teaching (Manfredo was the curator of the Settala Museum 1600–1680), as did, moreover, his aid Alessandro Tadino. Tadino's *Ragguaglio dell'origine e giornali successi della gran peste*, printed in 1648 represents the most complete medical report on the 1630 plague, albeit written some time later. The 1634 publication by the Benedictine Agostino Lampugnani, *La pestilenza seguita in Milano l'anno 1630*, is also interesting. From the perspective of historiography, the most systematic work is that of Giuseppe Ripamonti who printed his *De peste Mediolani quae fuit anno 1630* in 1641, a primary source for Manzoni.¹⁷

The drama, *La peste del 1630*, printed in 1632 by Benedetto Cinquanta, a friar of the Minor Observants, is less well-known. The author, who also wrote other sacred plays, does not show great skill in constructing a theatrical plot, however, some scenes, such as the scene in which the prostitute Clizia is robbed by the *monatti*, is of a disconcerting realism.

Two Political Thinkers from the Age of Carlo and Federico Borromeo

The Piedmontese thinker Giovanni Botero (1544–1617) can only be partially associated to the culture of Milan in the Borromaic era. Raised amongst the

16 The text, that remained unedited in ms 109 of the Ateneo di Salò, was published by Ermanno Paccagnini e Carla Boroni eds. (Milan, 2001).

17 Ed. Cesare Repossi (Milan, 2009).

Jesuits (from 1569 and 1574 he taught in the college of San Fedele in Milan), Botero left the Order in 1580 and in 1582 he became secretary to the Archbishop Carlo Borromeo. Apart from *De regia sapientia*, his first political treatise printed in Milan in 1583, his works printed in Milan from 1584 to 1585 fitted well with Carlo Borromeo's programme of rigorous asceticism and reorganization of the Church. His writings on the last days of the archbishop, repeatedly printed from 1584 to 1586, were amongst the best known records of the last moments of Borromeo. Then, from 1586 to 1599 he followed the education of the young Federico, that took place principally in Rome in those years, mostly away from Milan, Botero wrote his most famous political reflections, the *Ragion di stato* (from 1589) and the *Relazioni universali* (from 1591). Two editions of the *Ragion di stato* were printed in Milan, in 1596 and in 1598, and one of the first responses was printed in Milan in 1597, the *Discorsi sopra la Ragion di stato* by Apollinare Calderini from Ravenna, a member of the *Accademia degli Inquieti* in Milan. In his later life until his death in 1617, Botero was at the court of Savoy in Turin, however a collection of his religious poems with the title *Il Monte Calvario* beginning with the short poem *La primavera* was printed in Milan in 1610 and in 1611: a collection that can almost be seen coming full circle after such an unusual journey and returning to a poetic close to the rigour of Carlo Borromeo.¹⁸

The *Considerationi sopra Cornelio Tacito, nelle quali si trattano le più curiose materie della politica* (1623) by Pio Muzio (1574–1659), a Milanese historian, were written in the time of Federico Borromeo. The aim of this voluminous tome (621 pages) was to extract moral and religious teachings from ancient history against 'que' mostri indegni d'essere nomati' [those monsters who do not deign to be named] who 'hanno persuaso che non si possano reggere gli stati senza lasciare la dovuta obediienza a Dio' [are persuaded that it is impossible to rule a state without departing from the necessary obedience to God] (fol. 111r); what is more, the work was printed in Brescia and dedicated to Ferdinando Gonzaga, with no explicit deference paid to the cardinal Federico. The author was a Benedictine from the Milanese monastery of San Simpliciano.¹⁹

18 Romain Descendre, *L'état du monde: Giovanni Botero entre raison d'État et géopolitique* (Geneva, 2009), with preceding bibliography.

19 Cesare Mozzarelli, "Il benedettino milanese Pio Muzio e le considerazioni sopra Cornelio Tacito", *Studia Borromaeica* 14 (2006), pp. 199–216.

Lay Culture from the 16th to the 17th Century

It is not the case, however, to think that Milanese culture over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was monopolised by the Borromeo archbishops. It is useful to remember, as a general framework also relevant to cultural accomplishments, that both archbishops had frequent and difficult jurisdictional clashes with the Spanish authorities. It is, therefore, important to dedicate attention to culture that was not linked to religious institutions, but rather linked to political power.²⁰

First and foremost, the individual actions of the governors found their expression in a flood of printed edicts or announcements in either Italian, Latin, or Spanish; as early as 1584 a collection was printed, followed by another four in the 1590s, and collections were printed frequently in the seventeenth century. At the same time, the great juridical tradition of Milan (and Pavia) continued and produced, in 1575, for example, a new edition of the statutes of the College of Jurists, and between 1583 and 1585 the important *Lucubrationes* by the jurist Orazio Carpani on the *Statuta Mediolani* were printed.

Publications in Spanish were also rather numerous, evidently written by the community linked to the political or military power, or sometimes particular religious groups or groups of scholars. Amongst these, the *Observaciones de la vida del condestable Juan Fernández de Velasco* by Fermín Lopez de Mendicorroz, printed in 1625, was a biography of Velasco, governor of Milan (1592–1595, 1595–1600, 1610–1612), which was rather anti-Borromaic in flavour.²¹

Along different lines, a form of lay culture along noble lines found its expression in writings such as *La Villa* (1559) and *Il Liceo* (1572) by Bartolomeo Taegio. Over the following decades, there was no great vitality in terms of literary production in Milan. In 1594, however, Muzio Sforza Colonna, marquis of Caravaggio, founded the *Accademia degli Inquieti*. At the same time, in Pavia the *Accademia degli Affidati* was founded. In general terms it can be said that over the 16th and 17th centuries, an important number of historical publications and also works of poetry were printed in Pavia, differing here from the experience in Milan.

20 Political and cultural duality are well expressed even in the title of the volume *Lombardia borromaica e Lombardia spagnola, 1554–1659*, eds. Paolo Pissavino, Gianvittorio Signorotto (Rome, 1995).

21 Cesare Mozzarelli, "Nella Milano dei Re Cattolici. Considerazioni su uomini, cultura e istituzioni tra Cinque e Seicento", in *Lombardia borromaica*, 1: pp. 421–56.

Clearly, Tasso's fame reached the state of Milan, however he was known more for the *Gerusalemme Conquistata* than for the *Gerusalemme Liberata*: in Milan in 1616 *Gerusalemme Conquistata* was published with a commentary by Francesco Birago, an expert in chivalric matters, who in the same year wrote the *Dichiaratione et avvertimenti poetici, istorici, politici, cavallereschi e morali nella "Gerusalemme conquistata"*, dedicated to cardinal Federico. Three printings of the *Gerusalemme Conquistata* were also printed in Pavia (1594, 1601) whereas the *Gerusalemme Liberata* appears in Milan only in 1619. Many poems written in octaves took their inspiration from Tasso and, consistent with Borromaic culture, were written on religious matters. An example can be seen in a poem celebrating the figure of Constantine, *La risorgente Roma* (1611) by Giovanni Ambrogio Biffi, an intellectual who was also in contact with Lovanio. Furthermore, by 1620 the most recent works of the literary avant garde such as Giambattista Marino, quickly resonated within Milan, and 1625 saw the printing of *La secchia rapita* by Alessandro Tassoni and *Lo scherno degli dèi* by Francesco Bracciolini. *Don Quixote* was also printed in 1610 in Milan, other Spanish texts had previously been published including *Diana* by Jorge de Montemayor (1560 circa, 1616), and *Larazrillo de Tormes* (1587, 1615).

Furthermore, from the middle of the sixteenth century theatrical activity had already become established, cultivated in the circles of the Spanish governor and the noble Milanese families, despite being opposed by Carlo Borromeo. In 1594, for example, on the occasion of the marriage between the son of a governor and a Spanish noblewoman, a production of *Il precipitio di Fetonte* was staged, and in 1602 Cesare Negri published *Le Gratie d'Amore*, an important text in the history of choreography. The most consistent literary production, however, remains sacred literature; in this sector, the most significant title was *Adam* (1613, 1617) by Giovan Battista Andreini.

From 1560 onwards an eccentric trend can be identified, that formed as an alternative primarily to the linguistic rules that were being asserted throughout Italy, Milan included. This trend led to the establishment of an Academy known as the *Facchini della Val di Blenio*, which from this title alone demonstrated the intention of laughing at the socio-cultural conventions of intellectual society of the day. The founder was Giovanni Ambrogio Brambilla, however from 1568 the painter Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo became abbot, an occasion he marked with a self-portrait (now held in Milan at the Pinacoteca di Brera). Lomazzo, who became blind in 1572 and withdrew from artistic activity, produced some important writings on art, clearly with the help of collaborators, which were very rich in concrete references to works of art and authors: the *Trattato dell'arte de la pittura* in 1584 (and several times thereafter); the *Idea del tempio della pittura* in 1584. As a poet, he published his *Rime* in 1587, and then in 1589

he published his collection of *Rabisch* (arabesques), in which his poems are collected along with those of other poets in the Academy, inspired by a project of linguistic experimentalism and hybridism, aiming to reignite forms of dialects (mainly from the Lombard valleys) for expressionistic purposes.²²

The movement towards restoration of literature in dialect was thus begun in Milan, as in other Italian cities under Spanish rule (especially Naples, with Basile). In 1606 the *Varon Milanese* was printed, the first dictionary of Milanese dialect with 144 entries, drafted by Giovanni Capis and edited by Ignazio Albani (who was also a renowned poet), as was the *Prissian da Milan della parnonzia milanese*, written by Giovanni Ambrogio Biffi. The latter, a treatise on dialect phonetics, demonstrates a perspicacity and orderliness of observations unmatched in Italy at that time.²³

The *Cheribizio*, printed in 1624 with the sub-heading *Somario de tutte le professioni e arte milanese* is an interesting document: a poem of 338 loose hendecasyllables in a dialect hailing primarily from Milan but blended with the dialect of Bergamo and others. The work contains descriptions of scenes of Milanese life, with monuments, streets, workshops, and mostly hostleries. In addition to its linguistic oddity and its joyful exposition, this poem is a testament to the economic industriousness and social mixing within the life of the town. No author is named on the document, Dante Isella, however, has attributed the text to Bernardo Rainoldi who was active in the Val di Blenio academy toward the end of the sixteenth century. This work expresses deference towards civil authorities, however no mention is made of the archbishop Federico, a curious anomaly in a text from Milan dating from 1624.²⁴

Milanese Historiography at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century

Even in the times of the Borromeo archbishops, the tradition of studies examining the glorious past of Milan—which was becoming ever prouder of its status as a ‘second Rome’—continued to be active. An important example is the *Historia universale* by Gaspare Bugati, a Milanese Dominican from the convent of Sant’Eustorgio. The first edition of this work was published in Venice

22 In EDIT XVI Cnce 24456 e 49595, and ed. Dante Isella (Turin 1993).

23 Dante Isella, *Lombardia stravagante. Testi e studi dal Quattrocento al Seicento tra lettere e arti* (Torino, 2005), pp. 219–310, and Giulio Ciro Lepschy, “Una fonologia milanese del 1606: il *Prissian da Milan della parnonzia Milanese*”, from 1965, then in Idem, *Saggi di linguistica italiana* (Bologna, 1978), pp. 177–215.

24 Isella, *Lombardia stravagante*, pp. 219–310.

in 1570, it was later intergrated with an *Aggiunta dell'Historia universale e delle cose di Milano*, covering the years 1566 to 1581, printed in Milan in 1587. It is intriguing to notice that in this work, more particularly in the sections dealing with contemporary events, there is a certain level of reticence in the panegyrics relating to the actions of Carlo Borromeo: evidence perhaps of a school of thought that continued independently of the strict edicts of Borromeo, and perhaps with a level of veiled reserve or criticism.²⁵

At the same time in Cremona, the second city of the state, a landmark work in civil historiography was produced by the artist and historiographer Antonio Campi, *Cremona fedelissima città e nobilissima colonia de' Romani*, printed in 1585 with exquisite engravings by Agostino Carracci. Even a lesser polygraph such as Raffaele Toscano, active in both Lombardy and Piedmont, printed in 1587 *L'origine di Milano e di sei altre città di quello stato*, in which he depicts the history of seven cities of the state (Milan, Cremona, Pavia, Alessandria, Lodi, Novara, and Como) in rather pleasing octaves.

In the 1590s, the emerging personality was certainly the Jesuit Paolo Morigia (1525–1606). Morigia had already published many works of religious history over the previous decades, in particular, works on his own Order; however, with regard to Milanese history, the most important works he published are the *Historia dell'antichità di Milano*, in 1592, and *La nobiltà di Milano*, in 1595, which was later reprinted in 1619 with a *Supplemento* by Girolamo Borsieri. It is, however, significant that after 1601, that is to say after the definitive return to Milan from Rome of Federico Borromeo, Morigia's works tend to be tied to the archbishop: his important work *Santuuario della città e diocesi di Milano*, printed in 1603 is dedicated to Borromeo.²⁶

In general terms, the first thirty years of the seventeenth century saw the beginning of a series of specific studies published on individual churches in Milan, aimed primarily at promoting the Christian greatness of the city: The work of Giovanni Battista Villa, canon of the San Babila church, published in 1627, is particularly indicative of this trend, *Le sette chiese o siano basiliche stationali della città di Milano . . . con un discorso nel quale si dimostra come in tutti i tempi da tutti quegli che dominarono nell'alma città di Roma o spiritualmente o temporalmente la nostra città di Milano fu dichiarata seconda Roma* (the long discourse of great significance is found at pp. 297–394).

25 Cesare Mozzarelli, "Sant'Eustorgio, il domenicano Gaspare Bugati e la polemica antiborromea nella Milano del secondo Cinquecento", from 1998, then in Idem, *Tra terra e cielo. Studi su religione, identità e società* (Rome, 2005), pp. 139–49.

26 By 1597 the work on *Il Duomo di Milano*, considered the eighth wonder of the world, was dedicated to the archbishop of that time, who was then in Rome: in EDIT XVI Cnce 27941.

As Cesare Mozzarelli observes:

The attitude of Federico towards civil authorities changed dramatically from 1601 and he detached himself from a position of mere continuity with regard the conduct of san Carlo. It is possible to think that in strengthening his relations with Morigia, who well-interpreted, I believe, the aspirations and worries of all those in the city who did not agree with the confrontational and rigorous line of Carlo, Federico aligned himself with these. In an audacious and spectacular operation, Federico re-appropriated the history of the city to the Milanese church and subordinated Milan's civil identity to the sacred one through an ambitious display of the possibilities inherent in Christianised classicism. Thus saying, I refer to the development of a vision of Milan as a second Rome that is clearly expressed throughout the buildings of the Ambrosiana library.²⁷

Milanese Historiography in the 1620s: Giuseppe Ripamonti in the Ambrosiana Library and the Beginnings of a Series on Municipal History

Amongst the scholars working at the Ambrosiana in 1609, Giuseppe Ripamonte (1577–1643) was tasked with looking after ecclesiastical history. In 1617 he produced the first volume of his work *Historiae Ecclesiae Mediolanensis*: however this work incurred the disapproval of many who did not look favourably on some of the passages of the work, and judged them unedifying (such as the recollection on page 223 of the concubine, called *scortum*, who Saint Augustine brought with him from Africa). In 1619 the *Conservatori* of the Ambrosiana suspended Ripamonti from his position and proceedings at the Tribunal of the Inquisition began: in 1622 he was sentenced to five years of imprisonment. Federico Borromeo, however, commuted the sentence to confinement within the archbishop's palace, thus allowing Ripamonti to finish his second volume (1625), and then his third volume relating to the recently bygone era of Carlo Borromeo (1628). In 1630, therefore, still thanks to the indulgence of cardinal Federico, Ripamonti was re-admitted to the Ambrosiana. Nevertheless, Ripamonti's troubled relationship with the Ambrosiana library can be seen not only in personal reasons but also in historical and ideological terms: Ripamonti's claim for intellectual autonomy and his intention to provide

27 Cesare Mozzarelli, "Milano seconda Roma: indagini sulla costruzione dell'identità cittadina nell'età di Filippo II", from 1998, later in Idem, *Tra terra e cielo*, pp. 111–38: 133.

historical accuracy are evident (albeit with excesses and contradictions). He refused to pass over in silence even the ugliest moment of the history of the Church and he did not shrink back from the risk of clashing with the sensitivities of the living.²⁸

Furthermore, in the 1620s, on the initiative of the *Comune*, an important editorial operation commenced aimed at printing the most important historiographical works of Milan.²⁹ On 6 September 1622, the Council of the Decurioni deliberated on whether to endow the city with an official series of historical books. In 1628, therefore, the Malatesta family printed the first title, an elegant folio volume entitled *Historia patria* and written by Tristano Calco, which remains unedited. A second volume followed in 1630, which contained Giorgio Merula's *De antiquitate Vicecomitum* (the first ten books only, previously printed in 1500 by Minuziano), the *Vitae duodecim Vicecomitum* by Giovio (previously printed in Paris in 1549), and the *Vita Philippi Mariae Vicecomitis* by Pier Candido Decembrio, which remains unedited. However the plague of 1630 caused an abrupt halt to the continuation of the series.

The Years of Cardinal Cesare Monti (1632–1650) and the Nomination of Giuseppe Ripamonti as State Historian (1635)

After the plague there were thirty years of wars on Lombard soil, up until the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659). The first two decades of this period were characterized by the interesting character of Cesare Monti, the successor of Federico Borromeo as archbishop from 1632 to 1650. Jurisdictional conflicts reignited over the inauguration of the new archbishop between the Spanish authorities and the religious authorities (that were to last for the rest of the century): to the extent that Monti was not able to take office until 29 April 1635, not

28 Even recently the well-documented book by Edgardo Franzosini, *Sotto il nome del Cardinale* (Milan, 2013), interprets the hardships faced by Ripamonti only in personal terms (for his difficult relationship with Federico). However, it is perhaps opportune to view the case of Ripamonti in the more general historical framework in which difficulty to adapt to the new climate of Counter Reform was experienced by many intellectuals of the time (for example, albeit in a different way, Tasso, Botero, Borromini).

29 Giuseppe Petraglione, "Un'edizione ufficiale di storici milanesi", *Archivio Storico Lombardo* 32 (1905), pp. 172–85, Irene Scaravelli, "Gli *historici antiqui Mediolanenses* nella ricezione del '600 e del '700", in *Le cronache medievali di Milano*, ed. Paolo Chiesa (Milan, 2001), pp. 175–92.

without dispute, but nonetheless with notable resonance in printed works.³⁰ Over the following years, aside from religious and political initiatives, Monti promoted re-editions of the Ambrosian Missal (1640), the Ritual (1645), the Breviary (1641), the ceremonial for female monasteries (1641), the rules for the cloistered Ursulines (1643).³¹

Once the plague had passed, the Council of Seventy Decurioni returned to considering the project of a book series on municipal history that had been suspended in 1630. However, instead of publishing works that had been written in the past, they decided to entrust a living scholar with the task of drafting a new history of the city. Giuseppe Ripamonti nominated himself, and after deliberations on 23 December 1635, the Council awarded him the title of State Historian (a title never before used in Milan) with an attached salary. Ripamonti thus assumed the responsibility of taking forward the *Historia patria* from the year 1313, that is from the final year covered in the *Historia* of Tristano Calco that had been recently published (1628). The release, in 1641, of the first volume of Ripamonti's *Historia patria*, in a splendid edition by the Malatesta family, was of significant importance. This volume covered Milanese history from 1313 to 1558, that is, until the era of Charles V; in 1641 *De peste* was also released, a fundamentally important record of that recent painful tragedy. In December 1643, the second volume of the *Historia patria* was released, depicting the history of Milan from 1559 to 1584, that is, the era of Carlo Borromeo. Ripamonti died in that same year, however he left the material ready for the continuation of the work: three other printed volumes followed between 1646 and 1648, the first two edited by Stefano Scatter, and the third by Orazio Landi. This third and final volume is of particular importance, covering the era of Federico Borromeo, and this volume went up to the most recent past, that is until 1641, thus establishing itself as the greatest work of historiography of the time.³²

Ripamonti's *Historia patria* is extremely rich in information; however this information is not always well-considered and often unravels into a thread of historical interpretation. The excellent Latin adopted is often pompous, based on the model of Livy and embellished with a touch of baroque style. There is no doubt that this is a fundamental work of seventeenth century historiography

30 Giovanna Zanlonghi, "Immagine e parola nel teatro gesuitico. Testi e apparati per gli ingressi degli arcivescovi Cesare Monti e Federico Visconti", *Studia borromaica* 13 (1999), pp. 267–302.

31 Danilo Zardin, "L'arcivescovo Cesare Monti nella Milano del Seicento", in *Le stanze del cardinale Monti: 1635–1650. La collezione ricomposta* (Rome, 1994), pp. 23–28.

32 Caterina Santoro, "Gli storiografi della città di Milano", from 1929, later in Eadem, *Scritti rari e inediti* (Milan, 1969), pp. 303–10.

that is frequently called upon as a source of information on sixteenth and seventeenth century history.

After Ripamonti's death, the role of State Historian remained vacant. As a substitute, the Council decided to assign its patronage to works on Milanese history of particular merit. This patronage was thus granted in 1644 to an edition of the *Residua* of Tristano Calco, comprising the last two books of the *Historia patria* omitted from the Malatesta edition of 1628; the editor was the scholar Giovanni Pietro Puricelli, archpriest of the Basilica of San Lorenzo, who, in 1645, had published the *Ambrosianae Mediolani basilicae ac monasterii monumenta*.

The same Council funded the printing of the *Zodiaco della Chiesa Milanese* in 1650, covering the lives of the first twelve archbishops of Milan with appendices on *Memorie antiche di Milano e d'alcuni altri luoghi dello stato*. The author was the Tuscan scholar Placido Puccinelli (1609–1685), a Benedictine monk and author of countless writings of ecclesiastical scholarship, who, at that time, was affiliated to the Milanese monasteries of San Pietro in Gessate and San Simpliciano.³³

With regard to literature that can be deemed creative, a varied production can be noted that is ascribable to the baroque style, however nothing of exceptional standard: the collections of poems of Claudio Trivulzio (1625, 1636, 1639); the mock-heroic poem *I numi guerrieri* written by Carlo Torre (1640); the novels *La regina sfortunata* (1639) and *Il re tiranno* (1642) also by the versatile Torre.

Remaining with novels, the printing in Milan in 1649 of *La carrozza da nolo, ovvero del vestire e usanze alla moda* (previously released in Bologna in 1648), is worthy of note as it records one of the first appearances of the French calque 'moda'; in 1650 the sequel was published *Della carrozza di ritorno*. The identity of the author was hidden under various pseudonyms, he was however a bizarre Benedictine of the Cassine congregation named Agostino Lampugnani, born in Milan who took his vows in the monastery of San Simpliciano.

It is also important to highlight that the publication of periodic gazettes began in the 1640s in Milan, which were initially unregulated.³⁴

33 Simona Schenone, "La vita e le opere di Placido Puccinelli: cenni per una biografia", *Archivio storico lombardo* 114 (1988), pp. 319–34.

34 Pierangelo Bellettini, "Le più antiche gazzette a stampa di Milano (1640) e di Bologna (1642)", in *Anatomie bibliologiche*, eds. Luigi Balsamo, Pierangelo Bellettini (Florence, 1999), pp. 465–94.

Midway Through the Seventeenth Century: The Time of the Marquis of Caracena (1648–1656)

Around the middle of the seventeenth century, the most prominent individual in Milan was Luis de Benavides Carrillo, marquis of Caracena, who was governor of the state from 1648 to 1656. His military virtues were particularly praised. His victory against the allied forces of the King of France and the Este family of Modena who assaulted Cremona (1648), is depicted in *Obsidio Cremonensis* by Orazio Landi (1654), and an undated edition probably from slightly later than 1648, presents a *Panegyricus* dedicated to him by the Benedictine Pio Muzio. Other works dedicated to Caracena include works of political relevance such as the 1096 page long treatise *Portugal convencida con la razón* by Nicolas Fernández de Castro (1648), a member of the Milanese Senate, and *La Monarchia di Spagna* by Giovanni Pietro Crescenzi (Piacenza, 1650).³⁵

The marquis was also the master of the house that in Milan in 1649 welcomed Maria Anna of Austria, daughter of Ferdinand III, who was sent to marry the King of Spain, Phillip IV. The sojourn in Milan, which lasted two months, was also celebrated in many publications in verse and in prose, in Italian, Latin, and Spanish, and with rich engravings, in accordance with the most ornately baroque tastes.

With regard to the position of state historian that had remained vacant on the death of Ripamonti (1643), in 1651 it was finally decided to award the title to Ottavio Ferrari. Born in Milan in 1607, in his youth Ferrari had always been the favourite of cardinal Federico, who had nominated him as a doctor at the Ambrosiana in April 1631; however in September 1634 he moved to the University of Padua where he pursued an honourable career and published many works up until his death in 1682. The figure of Ferrari epitomizes, in negative terms, the decline of Milanese culture over those decades. Furthermore it is significant that in 1634—after the death of his protector Borromeo—he moved to Padua. It is also significant that in 1651 the Comune of Milan awarded the role of state historian not to an exponent of local culture but to an illustrious academic who resided and worked elsewhere. Nonetheless, Ferrari began his work in 1633, but was not able to bring it to completion.

After Ferrari's death, the authorities of the Comune decided not to assign the title to anyone, waiting for a suitable candidate. Along a different line, in 1654 the Senate promoted a different publication of historical value, the *Antiqua*

35 Gianvittorio Signorotto, "Il marchese di Caracena al governo di Milano (1648–1656)", in *L'Italia degli Austrias. Monarchia cattolica e domini italiani nei secoli XVI e XVII*, ed. Gianvittorio Signorotto (Brescia, 1993), pp. 135–81.

ducum Mediolani decreta, a collection of ducal decrees sent out from 1343 to 1499, which is to this day an indispensable resource for documentary research.

The most famous Milanese work from the middle of the seventeenth century was the *Mondo simbolico* by Filippo Picinelli, a member of the Canons Regular of the Lateran. This extensive inventory, printed in Milan in 1653, enjoyed great success in Italy and throughout Europe as it chimed with an element of seventeenth century culture with a passion for symbols and scholarly curiosity.

In terms of literary fiction, the most important work of that decade was undoubtedly the posthumous publication in 1656, by the Milanese College of the Barnabites of Sant'Alessandro, of the heroic poem *La caduta de' Longobardi* left unfinished by Sigismondo Boldoni, who died in the plague of 1630, and partially revised by his brother, the Barnabite Giovanni Nicolò: an original take on the literary techniques of Ariosto and Tasso, written as a celebration of Charlemagne and the Roman Church.

The Final Period of Spanish Rule, from 1659 to 1706: The Era of Maggi

Following the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), the final decades of Spanish domination were characterised by a form of stagnation, or rather economic restructuration, and by open or simmering conflicts between the governors and factions of the Lombard state, culminating in the wars that took place from 1700 to 1706 which led to the cessation of Spanish dominance. In literary terms, this long period can be summarized as the era of Maggi. Carlo Maria Maggi had already been nominated member of the Secretariat of the Senate in 1661, a position he held his entire life, until his death in 1699. Over those forty years, Maggi showed himself to be an intellectual in tune with the political and cultural system of the time, and certainly the best known scholar both within the state and beyond.

A lecturer in classical languages in the Palatine School from 1664, he also showed his skills by translating theatrical works from Latin (*Aulularia* by Plautus and Seneca's *Troadi*) and from Greek (*Ifigenia* by Euripides). The author of numerous works for theatre and of libretti for music, in keeping with the tastes of the time, Maggi established himself within literary culture with the 1688 printing of his *Rime varie*: the edition was printed in Florence under the patronage of the *Accademia della Crusca*, of which Maggi had been a member from 1683. The success of this collection of 149 poems was immediate and it was reprinted with additions in the same year in Milan and Turin, and in 1689 and in 1696 in Bologna. From a historico-literary perspective, Maggi's

Rime varie are evidence of classic composure and a seriousness of content that articulate the passage from the virtuosity and conceptism of the baroque to forms and styles closer to Arcadia.³⁶

One of the preferred subjects of Maggi in the *Rime varie* is the celebration of 'sacred love', for which the author found support amongst his friends in the Jesuits (Paolo Segneri amongst others). Furthermore, over that decade in Milan religious poetry flourished considerably, some of the works dating to that time include: *Dio* by Francesco de Lemene from Lodi, a curious prosimetrum the biblical epic from the Creation to the Redemption (1684); *Mondo creato*, a collection of poems by Giuseppe Girolamo Semenzi, a Somasco; and *Iesus puer* a poem in Latin hexameter by the Jesuit Tommaso Ceva (1690). The authors were all scholars in reciprocal contact, held together by their common membership of the *Accademia dei Faticosi*.

The tradition of great homilies in print also continued: in this sector a number of panegyrics the Observant Franciscan Angelico da Milan can be found, for example *Il ritratto di Cristo* that was recited in Milan's cathedral in November 1670 in honour of San Carlo; the *Prediche quaresimali* printed in 1686 by the Barnabite Giovanni Battista Bigarolo (1626–1695); the *Prediche annuali* printed in 1695 and in 1718 by the Barnabite Giuseppe Maria Ugolani from Cremona (1637–1726); and the *Lezioni sacre* by the Jesuit Carlo Ambrogio Cattaneo (1645–1705, greatly honoured in life), printed posthumously in 1713–1714.³⁷

At a more modest level of literary culture, in the second half of the seventeenth century, the success of an unusual sub-genre is of interest: the *bosinate*. These were compositions in verse in Milanese dialect or in other Lombard dialects, which were, for the most part, unsigned and of popular appeal, written on light-hearted or jocular subjects. They were born out of poetic experiments from the turn of the seventeenth century, and they mixed together learned and popular tradition, spurring on a tradition that lasted until the end of the nineteenth century.

An outstanding yet isolated figure of the time was the Spaniard Juan Caramuel Lobkowitz, who was moved to Vigevano, as the bishop of that town, from 1673 until his death in 1682. He arrived in Vigevano after a remarkably varied journey (in Spain, in Lovanio, in the Curia in Rome, in Prague), and from 1673 he set about printing in the marginal town of Vigevano a dozen of his impressive and intriguing works, written in Latin or in Spanish, for example

36 Pierantonio Frare, "La sincerità degli affetti: sulle *Rime varie* di Carlo Maria Maggi", *Testo. Studi di teoria e storia della letteratura e della critica* 29/2 (1998), pp. 45–74.

37 Samuele Giombi, "Predicazione e storia della Chiesa milanese tra XVII e XVIII secolo", *Studia borromaica* 13 (1999), pp. 33–56.

the *Architectura civil recta y obliqua* (1678, with a celebration of the Escorial), the *Theologia moralis fundamentalis* (1679) and the *Critica philosophica* (1681). Caramuel, who left his mark visibly on the main square in Vigevano 'la meyor y la más hermosa de toda Lombardía', and on the curved façade of the Cathedral, represents the most exuberant expression of baroque genius from the end of the seventeenth century.

In the 1690s, Maggi experimented with a new direction, in which he was to find his most remarkable voice: dialect theatre. The five theatrical texts in which he not only used Italian but also Milanese that was differentiated on two levels (blunter and more common for lowly characters, slightly Italianised for the middle classes) are: *Il manco male* (1695), *Il barone di Birbanza* (1696), *I consigli di Meneghino* (1697), *Il falso filosofo* (1698) and *Il concorso de' Meneghini* (perhaps from 1699). The use of dialect is dictated by a desire to adhere to reality, to the everyday lives of the inhabitants of the city. In any case, a strong and ever-present ethical tension, sometimes also religious tension, can be evinced from Maggi's scripts; however there do not appear to have been any direct political repercussions from the conflicts and political problems of the time. It is also interesting that Maggi did not bother to print his scripts during his lifetime: his *Comedie e rime in lingua milanese* were printed posthumously between 1700 and 1711, in Milan and in Venice.³⁸

The journey of Francesco de Lemene can be seen as at least partially analogous to that of Maggi. Slightly younger, Lemene was an admirer and follower of Maggi but remained based in Lodi. Another scholar was based in Lodi in around 1690, Filiberto Villani whose poem *Lodi riedificata* is of some significance but remained in manuscript form until it was printed in 1828. Lemene published many works during his lifetime, primarily the prosimetrum *Dio*, with verse and prose on religious subjects (1684), and a large collection of *Poesie diverse* (1692, in many editions). His masterpiece, however, was a play written in the dialect of Lodi, *La sposa Francesca* which, like Maggi's plays, was only to be published posthumously in 1709, five years after the death of the author. The pleasantness of the plot, the authenticity of the characters, and the vivacity of language make this work an *unicum* in Lombard literature, and hints that the forthcoming era of the lively plays of Goldoni was to arrive shortly.³⁹

The Milanese tradition of descriptions of the city and of the state continued in the second half of the 17th century, with the works of Galeazzo Gualdo Priorato (1666), and of Carlo Torre (1674). The *Ateneo dei letterati milanesi* by

38 Carlo Maria Maggi, *Il teatro milanese*, ed. Dante Isella (Torino, 1964), Idem, *Le rime milanesi*, ed. Dante Isella (Milan, 1994).

39 Francesco de Lemene, *La sposa Francesca*, ed. Dante Isella (Turin 1979).

Filippo Picinelli (1670), and the works on Milanese families by Giovanni Sitoni di Scozia (1705, 1706) are also important. In a different direction, the work on individual Milanese churches, reliquaries, and venerated saints that was promoted by Federico Borromeo, continued, culminating in the *Martyrologium Mediolanensis Ecclesiae* by Pietro Paolo Bosca (1632–1699). Bosca was also prefect of the Ambrosiana library from 1667 to 1680, and wrote his most important work on that institution, the *De origine et statu Bibliothecae Ambrosianae*, printed in 1672.

In general, it is historically correct to highlight the importance and usefulness, which continue to this day, of many of these erudite works; however it is equally important to remember their limitations, as Armando Petrucci demonstrates with regard to the work of Bosca:

Bosca shared all the defects, from parochialism to lack of historical perspective, from a scant philological background to a pseudo-encyclopaedic and superficial knowledge pertaining to many Italian historians, particularly those from Milan, from his time or slightly earlier.⁴⁰

A turning point can also be identified in the field of erudite research. In 1695, at the age of 23, Lodovico Antonio Muratori arrived in Milan. He worked as a librarian in the Ambrosiana for five years, consolidating his formidable education, and in those five years he produced his first outstanding works and established extensive and intense relationships with many Milanese intellectuals. His network included Maggi, whose *Rime varie* he published posthumously in 1700, and on whom he wrote a *Vita* also in 1700, and Francesco de Lemene, whose *Vita* he also published in 1708. It was Muratori (who in Milan in 1699 met Bernard de Monfaucon) who introduced a new method of historical investigation that was primarily founded on the broadest possible research into primary sources and into ancient and authoritative manuscripts, on philologically astute inquiry into each document studied, on extended exploration of chronicles and epistolary documents, with the purpose of creating an analytical reconstruction of the facts.

Muratori left Milan in 1700 to return to his home town of Modena. He maintained intense relationships with Milan, however, where he published over the course of two decades, all his works. Indeed, following the era of Spanish domination, in 1721, he created the *Società Palatina* in Milan, established by a group of local aristocrats, and steered primarily by Filippo Argelati, from Bologna but who moved to Milan, maintaining contact with Muratori. A new and demanding

40 Armando Petrucci, "Bosca, Pietro Paolo", in *DBI* 13 (1971), pp. 165–66.

cultural project was thus born, thanks to the foresightedness of a group of enlightened Milanese scholars and backed by the new power of the Hapsburgs: edited by the *Società Palatina* between 1723 and 1737 the 27 monumental volumes of the *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* were printed (the 28th in 1751), and from 1738 to 1743 the *Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi* were printed. These two works signify, for Milan, a turning point in the history of Italian advancement.⁴¹

Later, once the era of Spanish domination had ended and the era of the Hapsburgs had begun, reignited by the ethical legacy left by Maggi paired with the tradition of ascertaining historical veracity introduced by Muratori, also followed by new approaches, Milan began to take a guiding role in the cultural and literary history of Italy in the middle of the eighteenth century.

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⁴¹ Cremonini, "L.A. Muratori e la Società Palatina. Considerazioni su cultura e politica a Milano tra Sei e Settecento", in *Politica, vita religiosa, carità. Milano nel primo Settecento*, ed. Marco Bona Castellotti, Edoardo Bressan and Paola Vismara (Milan, 1997), pp. 185–212.

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Abbreviations

DBI *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Roma, 1960–ss.)

EDIT XVI *Edit 16. Censimento nazionale delle edizioni italiane del secolo XVI*, available at <http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it>.

ISTC *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue*, available at <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc>.

Milan (and Lombardy): Art and Architecture, 1277–1535

Serena Romano

Milan's domination by the Visconti and subsequently the Sforza, before its loss of independence and Spanish conquest is a long drawn out history. Occupying more than two centuries, it was marked by a strong dynastic continuity which was politically indispensable for the Sforza, who intentionally adopted their predecessor's Christian names and heraldic symbols. They frequented the same symbolic places: the palaces near the cathedral, the castles at Milan and Pavia, the other numerous castles in the countryside, flaunted with their visual propaganda, replete with portraits, equestrian monuments, and the many series of Famous Men beloved from Azzo Visconti to Ludovico il Moro.

This continuity of taste, international and unremittingly courtly endured until the late Quattrocento watershed, when Ludovico il Moro introduced the *maniera moderna*. But within this enduring courtly culture was another persistent characteristic which—if a familiar historiographic trope is correct—was almost an innately self-referential attitude leading Lombard artists to scrutinize the natural and physical world, starting from Trecento painting and manuscript illumination, through the mimetic devotion of wooden sculpture until to Caravaggesque 'realism' and beyond.

The dialectic between local artists and brilliant foreigners, which began as a lasting Visconti ambition, intensified during the reign of Ludovico il Moro, although not without local hostility or resistance. But without Giotto, Bramante and Leonardo, Lombard art would be unimaginable. Milan was unrivalled in Europe as an artistic crossroads, a crucible consistently undervalued for historic and historiographic reasons. This essay aims to provide a skeletal and synthetic account of the formation of this international crucible.

The Beginning of Visconti Rule

Triumphantly entering Milan after crushing Napoleone Della Torre at Desio in 1277, Archbishop Otto Visconti immediately enlarged and fortified his stronghold at Angera, demonstrating immediately his strong interest in visual propaganda: the main hall frescoes narrated his military and political achievements



FIGURE 9.1 Angera, Rocca. Archbishop Otto Visconti enters Milan.

(Fig. 9.1). The cycle faithfully matches Stefanardo da Vimercate's literary account, composed virtually simultaneously. The parallelism emphasizes the comprehensiveness of Archbishop Otto's political and cultural project. The frescoes, datable to the 1280's or little after, show Otto, immediately after Desio and newly installed in Milan, purposively exploiting word and image to promulgate his version of events. The Visconti historical myth was already being formulated: Galvano Fiamma's writings and the artistic programs of Azzo Visconti, during the 1330's polished and confirmed it.¹

Otto entrusted his pictorial credo to a workshop steeped in Veneto-Byzantine visual culture.² Soon afterwards, repercussions of the pictorial

1 Paolo Zaninetta, *Il potere raffigurato. Simbolo, mito e propaganda nell'ascesa della signoria viscontea* (Milan, 2013); recently Marco Rossi, "Il Maestro di Angera e la pittura fra XIII e XIV secolo", in *Storia dell'arte a Varese e nel suo territorio*, vol. 11, ed. Maria Luisa Gatti Perer (Varese, 2011), pp. 179–193, with earlier bibliography; Evelyn Welch, *Art and Authority in Renaissance Milan* (New-Haven-London, 1995, p. 12, with another date (1311 ca.). Gigliola Soldi Rondinini, "Angera medioevale nella storiografia", in <<*Fabularum patria*>>. *Angera e il suo territorio nel Medioevo* (Bologna, 1988), pp. 13–25.

2 The historiographic pillars of this whole essay are Pietro Toesca, *La pittura e la miniatura nella Lombardia* (Turin, 1912, repr. Turin, 1987); and *Arte lombarda dai Visconti agli Sforza*, ed. Roberto Longhi (Milan, 1958). A recent survey is *Lombardia gotica*, ed. Roberto Cassanelli (Milan, 2002).

revolution which had taken place at Assisi are traceable at various Lombard sites. Sant'Abbondio at Como, Chiaravalle della Colomba, San Francesco at Lodi all, in varying measure, reflect the spatial illusionism, painted architecture and narrative cogency of the Isaac episodes, and the St. Francis cycle at Assisi.³ Contemporaneously the Campionesi monopolized sculptural commissions with their massive, traditionalist style which resisted modernization more tenaciously. Otto's *arca* in the old Milan cathedral encapsulates this moment: a red Verona marble monument elevated on columns behind the altar of the chapel of Sant'Agnese, whose dedication recalls the anniversary of the victory at Desio. Some years later, perhaps still before the 1330's, the 'Maestro degli Osii' unfortunately still anonymous, is the most vigorous artistic personality, who sculpts the statues of the Broletto loggia. Other artists, less powerfully original, execute for various funerary monuments which still survive in fragments, mainly in Sant'Eustorgio, where the Visconti built their own necropolis and family chapels.⁴

A radical turnover occurred shortly afterwards. Azzo Visconti, imperial vicar in 1329, returned from exile; his uncle, Giovanni the bishop of Novara, was elected Archbishop of Milan in 1339 assuming office in 1342. They co-ruled Milan: Azzo died in 1339, but Giovanni survived until 1354. The new architectural and figurative culture, Lombard and specifically Milanese was forged by these two extraordinary personalities. Like their forefather Otto, they had clear ideas now located in a stronger political and social network. As a cultural project it compared favourably with, or surpassed other Italian Trecento courts.⁵ Giovanni and Azzo sited their palaces, their physical presence and symbols of power beside the old cathedrals, a transparent assumption of both civil and religious authority. The archiepiscopal palace survives in better condition

3 Andrea De Marchi, "Rayonnement assisiote lungo la via Francigena", in *L'artista girovago. Forestieri, avventurieri, emigranti e missionari nell'arte del Trecento in Italia del Nord*, ed. Serena Romano, Damien Cerutti (Rome, 2012), pp. 11–46.

4 *La Basilica di Sant'Eustorgio in Milano*, ed. Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua (Milan, 1984); Welch, *Art and Authority*, p. 17; Stefania Buganza, "I Visconti e l'aristocrazia milanese tra Tre e primo Quattrocento: gli spazi sacri", in *Famiglie e spazi sacri nella Lombardia del Rinascimento*, ed. Letizia Arcangeli et al., forthcoming. Laura Cavazzini, "Il maestro della loggia degli Osii. L'ultimo dei Campionesi?", in *Medioevo: arte e storia*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2008), pp. 621–630.

5 Louis Green, "Galvano Fiamma, Azzone Visconti and the revival of the classical theory of magnificence", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 53 (1990), pp. 98–113; Patrick Boucheron, *Le pouvoir de bâtir: urbanisme et politique éditiale à Milan (xiv^e xv^e siècles)* (Rome, 1998), pp. 108–123; Serena Romano, "Azzone Visconti: qualche idea per il programma della magna sala, e una precisazione sulla Crocifissione di San Gottardo", in *L'artista girovago*, pp. 135–162; Alberto Cadili, *Giovanni Visconti arcivescovo di Milano* (Milan, 2007).

than Azzo's which has been completely disfigured by later remodelling: only the palatine chapel of San Gottardo is unscathed, its precious beauty confirming Galvano Fiamma's fastidious description.⁶ Set around square courtyards the palaces echo a monastic, even classical language, as Biondo Flavio was to observe.⁷

Galvano Fiamma, a Dominican from Sant'Eustorgio like Stefanardo da Vimercate (the pro-Visconti Milanese topography becomes ever clearer) is a key figure in these years. Excommunicated during the 1320s, as was the whole Sant'Eustorgio community, he was at Bologna in 1330.⁸ Before 1333 he returned to Milan to serve both his convent and Azzo, for whom he became historiographer, and also—in my opinion—*concepteur* and cultural advisor. It could have been Galvano who met Giovanni di Balduccio at Bologna and summoned him for the Arca of Peter Martyr at Sant'Eustorgio (Fig. 9.2). The convent made its decision in 1335, the tomb is dated 1338 and the translation occurred in 1340.⁹ Giovanni di Balduccio transcended earlier models and established a new canon. It was paralleled by the arrival of Giotto.¹⁰ Giovanni Villani records that Giotto was sent to Azzo by the Florentine Commune, as ambassador *de luxe*, prefiguring potential political alliance. Modern scholarship assumes that Azzo summoned him, to secure the services of the century's greatest artist, and make Milan the most splendid and fashionable Italian court, rivalling the Angevins at Naples and the papal curia in Avignon.¹¹

6 Gualvanei de la Flamma Ordinis Praedicatorum, *Opusculum de rebus gestis ab Azone, Luchino et Johanne Vicecomitibus ab anno MCCCXXVIII ad annum MCCCXLII*, Carlo Castiglioni ed., *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* 12, 4 (Bologna, 1938), chapters IX, X, XV, XX, XXXV, XV–XX. New information in Edoardo Rossetti, *In "contrata de Vicecomitibus". Il problema dei palazzi viscontei nel Trecento tra esercizio del potere e occupazione dello spazio urbano*, in *"Modernamente antichi, anticamente moderni"? Modelli, identità, tradizione nella Lombardia del Trecento e Quattrocento*, forthcoming.

7 Angiola Maria Romanini, *L'architettura gotica in Lombardia* (Milan, 1964), p. 199 and 313–322; Pier Nicola Pagliara, "I Visconti e il Palazzo arcivescovile", in *"Modernamente antichi, anticamente moderni?"*, forthcoming.

8 Paolo Tomea, "Per Galvano Fiamma", *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 39 (1996), pp. 77–120.

9 Rossana Bossaglia, "La scultura", in *La Basilica di Sant'Eustorgio*, pp. 93–125.

10 Perhaps both in the same year 1336: Francesco Caglioti, "Giovanni di Balduccio a Bologna: l'Annunciazione per la cona papale di Porta Gagliera (con una digressione sulla cronologia napoletana e bolognese di Giotto)", *Prospettiva* 117/118 (2006), pp. 21–62, p. 44, note 104.

11 Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta (Parma, 1990), p. 53; Carla Travi, "Giotto e la sua bottega a Milano", in *Giotto e il Trecento*, ed. Alessandro Tomei (Milan, 2009), pp. 241–251.



FIGURE 9.2 Milan, *Sant'Eustorgio*. Giovanni di Balduccio, the Arca of Saint Peter Martyr.

Galvano describes Azzo's *magnificentia* and his marvellous Milanese palace without naming artists. Creighton Gilbert correctly assumed that the "Vanagloria", which Galvano records and Vasari misplaces at Padua, was a work by Giotto.¹² Galvano also records a Famous Men series of antique and medieval heroes, among them Charlemagne, Hector, Eneas and Azzo himself, including Attila, not as 'Flagellum Dei', but following Germanic tradition as a virtuous hero.¹³

12 Roberto Longhi, "Introduzione", in *Arte lombarda dai Visconti agli Sforza*, pp. xvii–xviii. Creighton Gilbert, "The Fresco by Giotto in Milan", *Arte Lombarda* xlvii–xlviii (1977), pp. 31–72; Gualvanei de la Flamma, *Opusculum*, p. 17; Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini, Paola Barocchi (Florence, 1966–1984), vol. II (Florence, 1967), p. 116.

13 Romano, "Azzone".



FIGURE 9.3 *Milan, episcopal palace. Head of an antique personage, from the Great Hall fresco cycle.*

Too much has vanished, for us to reconstruct the audacious magnificence and splendour of the Visconti residences in Milan, other Lombard cities, and also the countryside. Archbishop Giovanni, to whose service Galvano Fiamma passed after Azzo's death in 1339, was convinced of the power of images. As religious and the political head of Milan and Lombardy he launched a vast artistic programme, celebrating his own rule, embellishing his palaces, and revering his brother's memory. He paid for Azzo's tomb in San Gottardo in 1342–44.¹⁴ What still survives of the episcopal palace fresco decoration are some lacerated fragments (Fig. 9.3) of a vast cycle, including Antique subjects, possibly the legend of the foundation of Rome, and others perhaps of religious (?) or moralizing

14 Peter Seiler, "Das Grabmal des Azzo Visconti in San Gottardo in Mailand", *Skulptur und Grabmal des Spätmittelalters in Rom und Italien*, ed. Jörg Garms, Angiola Maria Romanini (Vienna, 1990), pp. 369–392; Patrick Boucheron, "Tout est monument. Le mausolée d'Azzone Visconti à San Gottardo in Corte (Milano 1342–1346)", in *Liber Largitorius. Études d'Histoire médiévale offertes à Pierre Toubert par ses élèves*, ed. Dominique Barthélemy, Jean-Marie Martin (Geneva, 2003), pp. 303–329. The link with the tomb of Guarnerio, Castruccio Castracane's son, at Sarzana, has been rightly emphasized. Giovanni remained in Lombardy until 1349, executing the statues for Milan's city-gates and the façade of Santa Maria di Brera in 1347.

intention.¹⁵ From an iconographic and also stylistic point of view it must have been extraordinarily ground-breaking. Framed by an amazing decorative framework of fictive marble and painted architecture *all'antica*, perhaps like that of Giotto in Azzo's palace, it would mark Visconti taste in palace decoration until the XVI century when it was still appreciated by Marcantonio Michiel and Cesare Cesariano.¹⁶ The memory of the beautiful Antique and Early Christian monuments of Milanese, rarely celebrated by medieval chronicles and city descriptions, found there a new life; characterized by a taste for precious materials and gold and ivory incrustation, it would endure until the Quattrocento frescoes at the Castello Sforzesco and the Castello at Pavia, to be eventually submerged in the fog and the humidity of the Leonardesque Sala delle Asse.¹⁷

Some bits of the frescoes of the archbishop's palace look rather Tuscan, recalling Stefano, Giotto's most brilliant pupil, who must have followed Giotto to Milan, perhaps after his death succeeding him at the Visconti court.¹⁸ Stefano could have worked for Giovanni, in his palace, collaborating (he, or some of his followers) with the vast workshop which the program certainly required. Afterwards he went to Chiaravalle most likely working for Abbot Egidio Biffi, a loyal supporter of the Visconti. But soon he left Chiaravalle, leaving the frescoes' completion to inferior painters.¹⁹ Both the Archbishop's cycle and Chiaravalle are works of the 1340s, crucial landmarks for Milan and Lombardy and a melting-pot for numerous painters who rapidly realized that modish Tuscan art was appreciated by powerful patrons. A few years later, in the Umiliati house of Viboldone, another abbey near Milan and a pendant for Chiaravalle, appeared Giusto de' Menabuoi,—another Tuscan painter—in the company of the so-called "Master of 1349".²⁰ Contemporaneously, and fascinated by the novelty of Stefano's painting, emerges Giovanni da Milano perhaps beginning to work the Santa Maria delle Grazie fresco at Mendrisio.²¹

15 Serena Romano, "I dipinti del Palazzo arcivescovile. Novità e riflessioni", in *Modernamente antichi*, forthcoming; Lavinia Galli, "Gli affreschi nel palazzo arcivescovile di Giovanni Visconti e la formazione di Giovanni da Milano", *Nuovi studi* 3 (1998), pp. 5–13.

16 Cesare Cesariano, *DI Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de Architectura libri Dece* (Como, 1521), p. cxv; Anonimo Morelliano (Marcantonio Michiel), *Notizia d'opere di disegno pubblicata e illustrata da Iacopo Morelli* (1525ca.), ed. Gustavo Frizzoni (Bologna, 1884), p. 113.

17 See below.

18 Vasari, *Le vite*, pp. 133–134.

19 *Un poema cistercense. Affreschi giotteschi a Chiaravalle Milanese*, ed. Sandrina Bandera (Milan, 2010); Romano, "I dipinti".

20 Mina Gregori, "Presenza di Giusto dei Menabuoi a Viboldone", *Paragone* xxv (1974), 293, pp. 3–20.

21 Luciano Bellosi, "Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento", *Prospettiva* 101 (2001), pp. 19–40; Mina Gregori, "Angeli e diavoli: genesi e percorso di

Galeazzo, Bernabò, Gian Galeazzo: 1354–1402

Given the immense losses, it is rather difficult to comprehend the range of the artistic civilization build by Galeazzo and Bernabò after the deaths of Azzo and Giovanni. In 1360 Galeazzo founded his castle at Pavia, locating his library, one of the largest in Europe, there.²² Emperor Charles IV founded Pavia University in the following year. Galeazzo loved Pavia. Bernabò, with his splendid wife, Regina Della Scala, possessed a superb palace beside his 'palatine' church of San Giovanni in Conca at Milan, and also many castles in the country, some of which, like Cassano and Pandino, have recently revealed unexpected pictorial treasures.²³ Bonino da Campione, *au fait* with the latest French novelties, and courted by the Gonzaga of Mantua and the Da Carrara at Padua worked for Bernabò. For him Bonino created the equestrian monument once in San Giovanni in Conca (Fig. 9.4), which impressed Petrarca as the Lord on his horse riding out behind the altar.²⁴ The masterfully illustrated chivalric romance *Guiron le Courtois* was also made for Bernabò.²⁵ In Galeazzo's and Bernabò's pictorial commissions, a strong sensibility for the Antique, partly inspired by Giottesque models, coexists with a deep feeling for Nature. His court artists observe and depict nature at a level unrivalled in Italy and perhaps Europe.²⁶ Subsequently, the *Tacuina Sanitatis* and the *Historiae Plantarum* continue on this scrutinizing and ordering the natural world. Similar courtly motifs appear in other contexts, as a token of the lord's grandeur, often in heraldic emblems, and in fabulous and capricious compositions.²⁷

The 1380s saw a further turning point. The change centred on two main events, both involving Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the first Visconti to become duke in 1395. In 1386, having imprisoned and eventually most likely killed his uncle

Giovanni da Milano", in *Giovanni da Milano. Capolavori del gotico fra Lombardia e Toscana*, ed. Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2008), pp. 15–55.

22 Elisabeth Pellegrin, *La bibliothèque des Visconti et des Sforza ducs de Milan au xv siècle* (Paris, 1955).

23 Romano, "Il modello visconteo"; Ead., "Palazzi e castelli dipinti"; on the residences of Bernabò and Regina Della Scala at Milan, Rossetti, "<In contrata de Vicecomitibus>".

24 Graziano Alfredo Vergani, *L'arca di Bernabò Visconti al Castello Sforzesco di Milano* (Milan, 2001).

25 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouv. Acq. fr. 5243. Kay Sutton, "Milanese luxury books: the patronage of Bernabò Visconti", *Apollo* 134 (1991), 357, pp. 322–326.

26 Romano, "Novità", and "Palazzi e castelli dipinti".

27 Toesca, *La pittura e la miniatura*, pp. 149–59; Otto Pächt, "Early Italian Nature Studies and the Early Calendar Landscape", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 13 (1950), pp. 13–47; Luisa Cogliati Arano, *Tacuina Sanitatis* (Milan, 1973).



FIGURE 9.4 *Milan, Castello Sforzesco. Bonino da Campione, equestrian monument of Bernabò Visconti (from San Giovanni in Conca, Milan).*

Bernabò, he assisted Archbishop Antonio da Saluzzo in laying the foundation stone for the new Milan cathedral. The duke wished to make it his family mausoleum, with the apse housing his father Galeazzo's tomb.²⁸ But a decade later

²⁸ Welch, *Art and Authority*, pp. 52–53; Buganza, “I Visconti”.

Gian Galeazzo changed his mind and founded the Pavian Charterhouse.²⁹ He entrusted this new project to Bernardo da Venezia, and planned to be buried there. The tomb, a factitious symbol of dynastic continuity between Visconti and Sforza, was realized much later, around 1497 by Gian Cristoforo Romano and his workshop.³⁰ Gian Galeazzo fell in love with his Charterhouse and began to divert money and artists from Milan Cathedral, towards it: in response, the Officials of the cathedral workshop tried themselves to secure the best artists, establishing a long-lasting pattern of envious rivalry.

Lombardy and Milan dominated by multiple Visconti rulers has disappeared. But Gian Galeazzo's reign was distinguished by a splendid international taste of wonderful artistic quality, enriched through the French connection of Gian Galeazzo's wife, Isabelle de Valois, sister of the king. Giovannino de' Grassi is recorded working at the Cathedral, as a *pictor* already by 1389. Soon after, he is described as *ingegnere* and *disegnatore*. The function of the architectural drawing as a planning idea rich in ornamentation resembles other important European projects, such as the Parlers at Prague or Strasbourg.³¹ Giorgio Vasari considered Milan cathedral and its accursed tabernacles as the primary example of Teutonic artistic decadence.³² But Milan cathedral resulted from the first European public competition, well before the famous one of 1401 for the Florentine Baptistery doors. Much more than Florence, Milan embraced Europe. Only Tuscan artists competed for the Baptistery doors, while Milan became a crucible for Italian, French, Burgundian, German and Hungarian architects and artists and disseminated this cosmopolitan culture to other Italian cities.

29 Luca Beltrami, *Storia documentata della Certosa di Pavia* (Milan, 1896); Carlo Magenta, *La Certosa di Pavia* (Milan, 1897); Maria Grazia Albertini Ottolenghi, Rossana Bossaglia, Franco Renzo Pesenti, *La Certosa di Pavia* (Milan, 1968), p. 11.

30 Andrea S. Norris, *The Tomb of Gian Galeazzo Visconti at the Certosa of Pavia*, Diss. N.Y.U. 1977. Welch, *Art and Authority*, p. 27.

31 Janice Shell, "Giovannino de Grassi takes an apprentice", *Arte lombarda* 96/97 (1991), pp. 131–132; Welch, *Art and Authority*, pp. 41–114 (for the role of Anechino de Alemania, goldsmith, p. 88 note 105); Marco Rossi, *Giovannino de Grassi* (Milan, 1995); Laura Cavazzini, *Il crepuscolo della scultura medievale in Lombardia*, Firenze 2004; Marco Rossi, "Il cantiere del Duomo di Milano e l'unità delle arti", in *Lombardia gotica e tardo gotica*, ed. Marco Rossi (Milan, 2005), pp. 219–235. James A. Ackerman, "Ars sine scientia nihil est". Gothic Theory of Architecture at the Cathedral of Milan", *Art Bulletin* 31 (1949), 2, pp. 84–111, remains fundamental for the Cathedral project, despite encapsulating historiographic prejudices: I quote, "The foundation of the Cathedral of Milan in 1386 [...] signaled Lombardy's emergence from an artistic eclipse which began at the close of the Romanesque period [...] a society which had so recently emerged from two centuries of cultural obscurity" (pp. 85–86).

32 On Vasari, Laura Cavazzini, "La vita di Andrea Pisano e la scultura della prima età", in *Giorgio Vasari e il cantiere delle Vite del 1550*, eds. Barbara Agosti, Silvia Ginzburg, Alessandro Nova (Venice, 2013), pp. 2015–216.

Certainly, not without problems. The vast archive of the cathedral Fabbrica is still not fully exploited and reveals the rather provincial and hysterical behaviour by the Deputati, who summoned international stars and as quickly dismissed them.³³ The documents show a sharp conflict between a conservatism, rooted in a traditional 'Lombard' architectural and decorative idiom, and more 'modern' tastes and procedures. Excavations in the 1970s uncovered the very Lombard architectural vocabulary of the foundations and the first apsidal design. It was rapidly changed and updated, but Lombard traditionalism visibly lingered.³⁴ The so-called Campionesi, and Lombard 'families' such as the Solari participated in the cathedral workshop, and remained enduring in Lombard architecture and sculpture. Antonio and subsequently Giacomo da Campione, an associate and close collaborator of Giovannino de Grassi (Fig. 9.5) who died in the same year 1398, both worked at the cathedral.³⁵

French architects, sculptors and miniaturists appear briefly in the Cathedral workshop and vanish: Jean Mignot, who sadly prophesied that the Dome would certainly collapse ("ruet pro certo"), Roland de Banville and Pietro di Francia. The Italian Dalle Masegne, who moved to Pavia, and Matteo Raverti, who left for Venice. Germans such as Annex Marchesten, Hans von Fernach (Fig. 9.6), Ulrich von Ensingen, Peter Monich; Walter Monich, another German, ended up in the Abruzzo; the Hungarian Lasse is also recorded, and other Hungarian masters must have worked with him. This brief and partial list documents neither the rapid rotation, nor the close collaboration between individuals of very different artistic formation and personality.³⁶ Very strong French and Bohemian elements emerge in Giovannino de Grassi's illuminated books, the Offiziolo, completed 40 years later by the bizarre and genial Belbello da Pavia, and also the famous Bergamo Tacuino.³⁷ At the beginning of Quattrocento the star was Michelino da Besozzo, whose sculptural counterpart was Jacopino

33 *Annali della Fabbrica del Duomo di Milano dalle origini fino al presente*, 9 voll. (Milan, 1877–1885). Patrick Boucheron, *Le pouvoir de bâtir*, pp. 129–197; Id., "Production de l'oeuvre et valeur sociale: le marché de la sculpture à Milan au 15e siècle", in *Economia e arte. Secc. XIII–XVII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Florence, 2002), pp. 611–633.

34 Carlo Ferrari da Passano, *Le origini lombarde del Duomo* (Milan, 1973), pp. 12–13; Rossi, "Il cantiere".

35 Cavazzini, *Il crepuscolo*, pp. 1–35.

36 Cavazzini, *Il crepuscolo*; Rossi, *Giovannino*, pp. 83–127, e "Il cantiere"; Id., "Maestranze ungheresi nel Duomo di Milano", *Arte Lombarda* 139 (2003), pp. 28–34.

37 Toesca, *La pittura e la miniatura*, pp. 135–159; Millard Meiss, Edith Kirsch, *The Visconti Hours* (London, 1972); Milvia Bollati, "Giovannino e Salomone de Grassi", *Arte cristiana* 75 (1987), pp. 211–224; *Tacuino di disegni*, ed. fac-simile, Monumenta Bergomensia (Bergamo, 1963); Antonio Cadei, *Studi di miniatura lombarda* (Rome, 1984).



FIGURE 9.5 *Milan, Cathedral. Giovannino de' Grassi, Saint Christopher, pillar of the northern sacristy.*

da Tradate, fascinated by Burgundian and Flemish styles and the author of such masterpieces as Pope Martin V enthroned, and the San Babila.³⁸ Michelino decorated Gian Galeazzo's Funeral eulogy, written by the Augustinian Pietro da Castelletto. He soon left Milan for the Veneto, and is attested at Venice in 1410, when he met Giovanni Alcherio for technical recipes and materials.³⁹ In the disastrous situation provoked by Gian Galeazzo's death in 1402, Michelino's

38 Laura Cavazzini, "Jacopino da Tradate fra la Milano dei Visconti e la Mantova dei Gonzaga", *Prospettiva* 86 (1997), pp. 4–36.

39 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms.lat. 5888. François Avril and Marie-Thérèse Gousset, *Manuscripts enluminés d'origine italienne. 3. XIV^e siècle. I. Lombardie-Ligurie* (Paris, 2005), pp. 126–128 with earlier bibliography. Monika Dachs-Nickel, "Zur Künstlerischen Herkunft und Entwicklung des Michelino da Besozzo", *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 45 (1992), pp. 51–81. In 1388 the Augustinians at San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro, and notably their prior Bonifacio Bottigella were Michelino's patrons for a lost St. Augustin cycle. The Bottigella would be important patrons throughout the Quattrocento. For Alcherio, Bianca Silvia Tosatti, "La 'Tabula de vocabulis sinonimis et equivocis colorum', ms.lat. 6741 della Bibliothèque Nationale di Parigi in relazione a Giovanni Alcherio", *Acme* 34 (1983), 2–3, pp. 129–187.

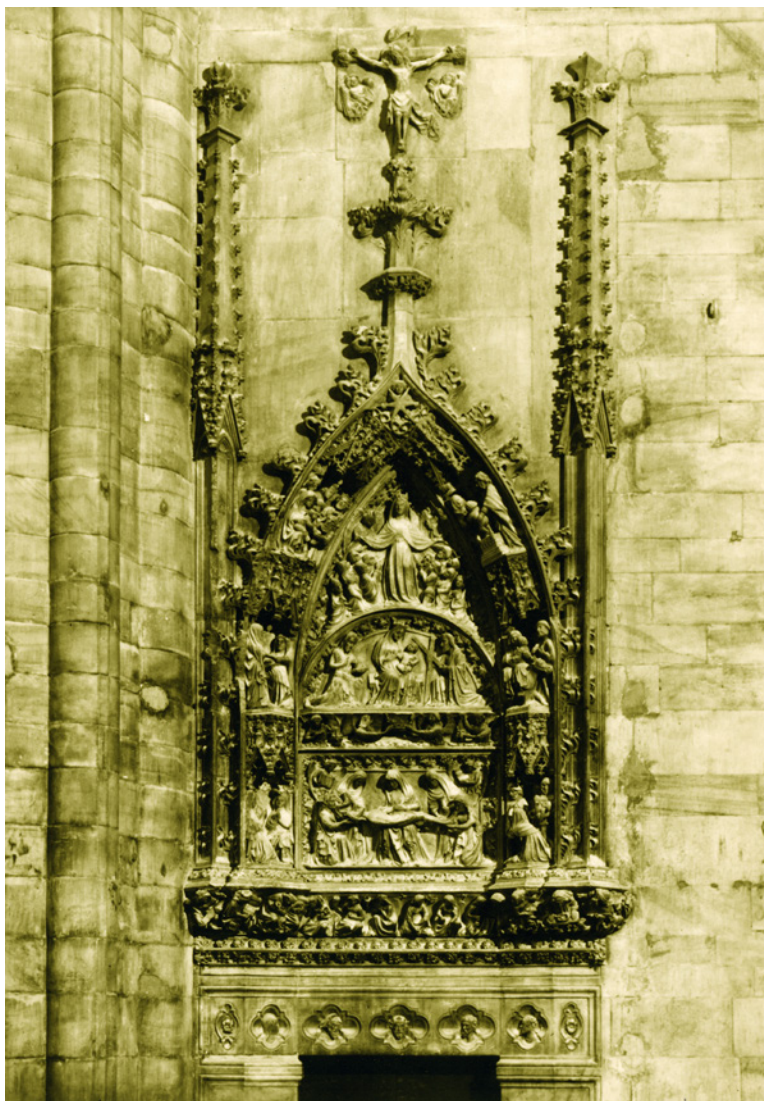


FIGURE 9.6 *Milan, Cathedral. Hans von Fernach, portal of the southern sacristy.*

departure is emblematic. Michelino the most famous artist of the period, acclaimed by such Humanists as Decembrio, would return to Milan and work on the Cathedral stained glass, and also for the Borromeo palace and their palatine church of Santa Maria Podone. But the splendours of International Lombard Gothic were nearing an end.⁴⁰

40 Buganza, "Note"; Ead, *Palazzo Borromeo* (Milan, 2008).

Filippo Maria and the End of the Visconti

The difficult period of Giovanni Maria Visconti (1402–1412) caused deep rifts in the Milanese artistic fabric, and one must wait until the 1420s for the artistic initiatives of the crippled and hypochondriac duke Filippo Maria.⁴¹ Milan was somewhat in decline, and while still a cultural protagonist among Italian courts was less glittering than in Gian Galeazzo's years.⁴² Some major artists disdained Milan. Michelino, as said, had left the city. Gentile da Fabriano, formed in Gian Galeazzo Pavian years, worked at Brescia for the Malatesta and apparently never visited Milan. Pisanello worked for the Gonzaga at Mantua, and reached Milan only in 1440, having just cast medals for the duke and Decembrio; he may have worked on the castle at Pavia.⁴³ Alberti and Mantegna never visited Milan, and when the Monza cathedral canons wanted a chapel frescoed with the Iron Crown legend, they commissioned not an international star, but the local workshop of the Zavattari.⁴⁴ At the Collegiata of Castiglione Olona, Cardinal Branda used Brunelleschian architectural models, which provoked no echo in Lombardy, and only Florentine sources attest Brunelleschi's presence at the Cathedral and Castello at Milan.⁴⁵ The sophisticated Pavian painter Donato de' Bardi was exiled at Genoa, where his Mediterranean-Flemish style would eventually interest Vincenzo Foppa.⁴⁶ The places of activity of Andrea and Filippo da Carona, who had family links with the Lombard Solari, reaches

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- 41 Stefania Buganza, "Note su Filippo Maria Visconti committente d'arte", in *Seicento anni dall'inizio del ducato di Filippo Maria Visconti, 1412–1447. Economia, politica, cultura*, forthcoming.
 - 42 Carl Brandon Strehlke, "Li magistri con li discepoli: thinking about art in Lombardy", in Barbara Agosti et al., *Quattro pezzi lombardi (per Maria Teresa Binaghi)* (Brescia, 1998), pp. 8–38 remains very interesting.
 - 43 Andrea De Marchi, *Gentile da Fabriano* (Milan, 1992), 11–45; Keith Christiansen, "L'arte di Gentile da Fabriano", in *Gentile da Fabriano e l'altro Rinascimento*, ed. Laura Laureati and Lorenza Mochi Onori, catalogo della mostra, Fabriano, 2006 (Milan, 2006), pp. 19–51, esp. p. 25. For Pavia, Cesariano, *Di Lucio Vitruvio*, p. CXV; *Pisanello. Le peintre aux sept vertus*, ed. Dominique Cordellier, Paola Marini; Dominique Cordellier, "Documenti e Fonti su Pisanello (1395–1581 circa)", *Verona Illustrata* 8 (1995), pp. 3–282.
 - 44 This cycle, datable circa 1441, originated in the context of Bianca Visconti's and Francesco Sforza's marriage, but not as a direct commission of Filippo Maria, since it was most likely the canons' initiative. Anthony Hirschel, "Problems of patronage at Monza: the legend of Queen Theodelinda", *Arte lombarda* 80/82 (1987), pp. 105–113; *Monza. Il Duomo nella storia e nell'arte*, ed. Roberto Conti (Milan, 1989).
 - 45 Carlo Bertelli, *Masolino: gli affreschi del Battistero e della Collegiata a Castiglione Olona* (Milan, 1998); Buganza, "Note".
 - 46 Giovanni Romano, "L'incontro con il mondo nordico tra Milano e Genova", in *Vincenzo Foppa*, ed. Giovanni Agosti, Mauro Natale, Giovanni Romano (Milan, 2003), pp. 114–117.

from Venice to Lombardy and Liguria. Their main work, the huge funerary monument conceived for the Borromeo chapel in San Francesco Grande at Milan and now at Isola Bella (Fig. 9.7), has rightly been defined as the sculptural equivalent of Pisanello, antiquarian in style with a dreamlike, subjective aspect.⁴⁷

Filippo Maria, who first inventoried the Pavian Library in 1426, was above all else interested in books.⁴⁸ He wanted Antique historical books to be translated into 'vulgar' Italian. He took an interest in History, a genuinely Humanistic field, but from a very personal and dynastic viewpoint. Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* seemed a proper model to reflect Visconti's mythical genealogy, and were translated in manuscripts illustrated by the anonymous 'Vitae Imperatorum Master'.⁴⁹ Pier Candido Decembrio himself used a Suetonian model to write his biography of Filippo Maria.⁵⁰ Humanists flocked to Milan from the first years of the century, Antonio Loschi, Aurispa, and subsequently Gasparino Barzizza, Panormita, Filelfo and the Pavian Decembrios, to cite only some of the intellectuals who visited and lived at Milan or Pavia, not only to please the Duke, but because there the University provided well-paid jobs for professors. Maffeo Vegio witnessed another crucial event of the religious, intellectual and artistic Lombard life at Pavia in 1418: in that same year Bernardino da Siena was preaching at Milan, moving the crowd and also Filippo Maria's heart.⁵¹ From this date on the allegiance between the prince, the aristocracy and Observant religious Reform is attested in Lombardy, as in all Italian

47 Giancarlo Gentilini, "Virtù ed eroi di un'impresa dimenticata. Il monumento di Vitaliano e Giovanni Borromeo", in *I monumenti Borromeo*, ed. Mauro Natale (Turin, 1997), pp. 47–82; Aldo Galli, "Intorno alla scultura di Castiglione Olona", in *Lo specchio di Castiglione Olona*, ed. Alberto Bertoni e Rosangela Cervini, Castiglione Olona 2009, pp. 55–73; Id., "Il monumento Borromeo già in San Francesco Grande nel corpo della scultura lombarda", in *"Modernamente antichi, anticamente moderni"?*, forthcoming.

48 Pellegrin, *La bibliothèque*.

49 Anna Melograni, "Appunti di miniatura lombarda: ricerche sul 'Maestro delle Vitae Imperatorum'", *Storia dell'Arte* 70 (1990), pp. 273–314; Fabrizio Lollini, "Maestro delle Vitae Imperatorum", in *Dizionario biografico dei miniatori italiani*, ed. Milvia Bollati (Milan, 2004), pp. 587–589.

50 Massimo Zagga, "Appunti sulla cultura letteraria in volgare a Milano nell'età di Filippo Maria Visconti", *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 170 (1993), pp. 161–219, 321–382; Id., "Copisti e committenti di codici a Milano nella prima metà del Quattrocento", *Libri e Documenti* 21 (1995), pp. 1–45; Paolo Viti, "Decembrio, Pier Candido", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 33 (Rome, 1987), pp. 488–498.

51 Raoul Manselli, "Bernardino da Siena", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 9 (Rome, 1967), pp. 215–226. Bernardino had already visited Pavia in 1410.



FIGURE 9.7 *Isola Bella, Borromeo palace. Filippo and Andrea da Carona, funerary monument of Vitaliano Borromeo (from San Francesco Grande, Milan).*

regions and courts. This initiated a new wave of patronage, multiple renewals of churches, altars and convents, beginning a new artistic age throughout the Quattrocento and beyond.⁵²

The Sforza

The Sforza cultural achievement defies brief description. Between Francesco Sforza's victory in 1450 and the loss of Lombard independence in 1535, life and culture in Milan, Lombardy and indeed all Europe are radically transformed. It is a complex story, whose beginning is marked by economic austerity and, perhaps, a lack of ideas.

The continuing Cathedral project overshadowed the urban panorama of Milan, and, crucially, the "Solari Dynasty" dominated the cathedral workshop. They produced a simplified and decorated architecture, with plain surfaces and supports reminiscent of Cistercian models, with many antiquarian details and terracotta decorations enduringly popular in Lombardy.⁵³ In the 1460s they controlled the Castello Sforzesco, which Francesco Sforza wanted to update, and also from 1462 the Pavian Charterhouse. Also San Pietro in Gessate, which was funded by Pigello Portinari, the "manager" of the Medici bank; the Observant Augustinian Santa Maria Incoronata, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Santa Maria del Carmine, to name only the main examples betray their influence. In a word, the Solari defined the mid-Quattrocento appearance of Milan. In the mainly Observant churches and convents there was an increasing number of aristocratic family chapels, with new paintings and sculptures.⁵⁴

A *déjà vu* ensued. Illustrious foreign artists arrived at Milan, often as political ambassadors mainly from Tuscany, where Cosimo de' Medici knew how to use culture. These strangers, although cherished and spoiled by powerful patrons, got important tasks and occupied positions of responsibility under the Sforza,

52 Alessandro Nova, "I tramezzi in Lombardia fra xv e xvi secolo. Scene della Passione e devozione francescana", in *Il Francescanesimo in Lombardia. Storia e arte* (Milan, 1983), pp. 197–216.

53 Charles Morscheck, "The Solari Dynasty in Milan in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries", in *Magistri d'Europa. Eventi, relazioni, strutture della migrazione di artisti e costruttori dai laghi lombardi* (Como s.d. [1996?]), pp. 193–199; Richard Schofield, "Avoiding Rome", *Arte Lombarda* 100 (1992), pp. 29–44.

54 Luciano Patetta, "I temi nuovi dell'architettura milanese del Quattrocento e il Lazzaretto", *Arte Lombarda* 79 (1986), pp. 75–84.

but fatally encountered the visceral hostility of local artists.⁵⁵ Benedetto Ferrini arrived in 1453, and had to fight with Bartolomeo Gadio, for 25 years in charge of the Sforza strongholds.⁵⁶ In 1456 the Tuscan Antonio Filarete got the commission for the Ospedale Maggiore (Fig. 9.8), for which he invented a modular and functional architecture, with round arches: its Brunelleschian idiom contrasted with the terracotta decorations used also at the Banco.⁵⁷ Filarete passed through the Cathedral workshop, designed the Sforzinda as the Lord's ideal city, and eventually left Milan, in the severe judgement of Vasari an erratic academic inferior to the great architect Alberti.⁵⁸

The Medici bank, the Florentine branch directed by Pigello Portinari, has been unconvincingly attributed to Michelozzo. Solari terracotta tondos with heads *all'antica*, are perhaps linked to the pictorial programme with ancient emperors, partly executed by Vincenzo Foppa.⁵⁹ During the 1460s Giovanni Antonio Amadeo appears in the Solari workshop. He would be their real successor, for his local roots and his ability to manage the many complex and difficult ensembles of architecture, stone sculpture, and terracotta desired by powerful patrons. At eighteen, a document proves him already to be working for the ducal circle. In 1466–67 he was working at the Pavian Charterhouse, then directed by Guiniforte Solari, and managed its vast façade later. He worked on the best Sforza projects, which he launched or appropriated such as

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- 55 Luisa Giordano, "Milano e l'Italia nord-occidentale", in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il Quattrocento*, ed. Francesco Paolo Fiore (Milan, 1988), pp. 166–199.
- 56 Raffaello Giolli, *Bartolomeo Gadio e l'architettura militare sforzesca* (Milan, 1935); Maria Verga Bandirali, "Umanesimo problemi aperti: 1, Documenti per Benedetto Ferrini ingegnere ducale sforzesco 1453–1479", *Arte lombarda* 60 (1981), pp. 49–102.
- 57 *Architettura e umanesimo. Nuovi studi su Filarete* ed. Berthold Hub, *Arte lombarda* 155 (2009), esp. Andreas Tönnemann, "Il dialogo di Filarete. L'architetto, il principe e il potere", pp. 7–11; Alessandro Rovetta, "Filarete e l'umanesimo greco a Milano: viaggi, aicizie e maestri", *Arte lombarda* 66 (1983), pp. 89–102; Gian Alberto Dell'Acqua, "Le teste all'antica del Banco Mediceo a Milano", *Paragone* 34 (1983), 401/403, pp. 48–55; Elena Caldara, "La produzione in cotto di Filippo e Andrea da Carona per il Banco Mediceo di Milano e per i palazzi di Castiglione Olona", in *Lo specchio di Castiglione Olona*, pp. 75–84.
- 58 Filarete, *Trattato di architettura*, ed. Anna Maria Finoli and Luigi Grassi (Milan, 1972). Vasari, *Le vite*, vol. 3, p. 246.
- 59 Now at the Castello Sforzesco, Milan. John T. Paoletti, "The Banco Mediceo in Milan: urban politics and family power", *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 24 (1994), pp. 199–238; Roberta Martinis, "Il palazzo del Banco Mediceo: edilizia e arte della diplomazia a Milano nel xv secolo", *Annali di architettura* 15 (2003), pp. 37–57. Schofield, "Avoiding Rome", p. 32. On Foppa, see below.



FIGURE 9.8 Milan, Ospedale Maggiore. Antonio Filarete, façade.

Santa Maria presso San Satiro; he became ‘ingegnere’ of the Cathedral. In brief he was a successful and enduring factotum.⁶⁰

The “resistance to Florence”—to borrow a famous expression—namely the workshops’ and patrons’ strong attachment to Lombard architectural and decorative tradition, continued during the 1460s and early 1470s, perhaps supported by the ducal decrees enforcing standards of materials and measures.⁶¹ Painters reacted similarly. Bonifacio Bembo, his brother Benedetto, Giacomo da Vismara, Zanetto Bugatto, Stefano de Fedeli, and others responded to ducal or other ‘public’ calls by forming temporary associations.⁶² Bonifacio enjoyed

60 Giovanni Antonio Amadeo, *Scultura e architettura del suo tempo*, ed. Janice Shell, Liana Castelfranchi, Milano 1993; Richard V. Schofield, Janice Shell, Grazioso Sironi, *Giovanni Antonio Amadeo: documents* (Como, 1989). On his collaborator, the sculptor Giovanni Antonio Piatti, Marco Tanzi, “Novità per l’ ‘Arca dei Martiri Persiani’”, *Prospettiva* 63 (1988), pp. 51–62.

61 Borrowed from Jean Bony, “The resistance to Chartres in early thirteenth-century architecture”, *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 20–21 (1958), pp. 35–52. For the ducal decrees Sandrina Bandera, *Agostino de’ Fondulis e la riscoperta della terracotta nel Rinascimento lombardo* (Bergamo, 1997), p. 39.

62 Mauro Natale, “Pittura in Lombardia nel secondo Quattrocento”, in *La pittura in Italia. Il Quattrocento* (Milan, 1986), pp. 61–84; Id., “Magnificenza e ragione: la pittura a Milano

a special status with Francesco Sforza, having been his supporter since 1447: and Cremona, Bembo's city, was a crucial site in the process of constructing a Sforza image.⁶³ The projects with which the lord entrusted Bembo are absolutely traditional in aspect, closely resembling the last works of Filippo Maria's times. Here we also find Vincenzo Foppa, whose style differs from the others, but who cooperates with them, and who also officially assesses colleagues' works at the Castello Sforzesco.⁶⁴

Between 1456 and 1461 Bonifacio directed the fresco programme in Corte Vecchia of *Preux* and *Preuses* in a new Plutarchian version, described in Filelfo's *Prosopopee*. There was a clear link with the old Visconti cycle of *Uomini Illustri* (mentioned above), but now the frescoes were more public and easily visible in the courtyard. It included female heroines, since Francesco Sforza desperately needed the support of his wife Bianca Maria Visconti.⁶⁵ Bembo & Co. worked extensively in the 1460s, and Galeazzo Maria chose them again in the 1470s, to work at both his castles of Milan and Pavia.⁶⁶ Galeazzo Maria installed his wife and family at Corte Vecchia and redecorated the Castle at Milan, deliberately maintaining decorative and heraldic continuity with the existing Visconti frescoes. There was a 'dynastic' room, with effigies of dukes Gian Galeazzo and Filippo Maria: the Sforzas bitterly missed the ducal title which was regained

al tempo di Francesco e di Galeazzo Maria Sforza", in *Pittura a Milano. Rinascimento e Manierismo*, ed. Mina Gregori (Milan, 1998), pp. 3–12; Strehlke, "Li maestri". Recently *I tarocchi dei Bembo: dal cuore del ducato di Milano alle corti della valle del Po: 'quelle carte de triumphs che se fanno a Cremona'*, ed. Sandrina Bandera, Marco Tanzi (Milan, 2013). Many documents published by Janice Shell, *Pittori in bottega. Milano nel Rinascimento* (Turin, 1995), for the Quattrocento and Early Cinquecento.

- 63 Luisa Giordano, "L'autolegittimazione di una dinastia: gli Sforza e la politica dell'immagine", *Artes* 1 (1993), pp. 7–33.
- 64 Evelyn Welch, "New documents for Vincenzo Foppa", *Burlington Magazine* 127 (1985), pp. 296–300.
- 65 Francesco Caglioti, "Francesco Sforza e il Filelfo, Bonifacio Bembo e 'compagni': nove prosopopee inedite per il ciclo di antichi eroi ed eroine nella corte ducale dell'arengo a Milano (1456–1461 circa)", *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 38 (1994), 2/3, pp. 183–217.
- 66 Pierluigi De Vecchi, "Committenza e attività artistica alla corte degli Sforza negli ultimi decenni del Quattrocento", in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, (Milan, 1983), pp. 503–514; Evelyn Welch, "The image of a fifteenth-century court: secular frescoes for the Castello di Porta Giovia, Milan", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 53 (1990), pp. 163–184; Marco Albertario, "La cappella e l'ancona delle reliquie nel Castello di Pavia (1470–1476)", *Museo in rivista* 3 (2003), pp. 49–116"; Id., 'Ad nostro modo': la decorazione del castello nell'età di Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1466–1476)", in *Il Castello Sforzesco di Milano*, ed. Maria Teresa Fiorio (Milan, 2005), pp. 99–134.

only in 1494 by Moro. Galeazzo Maria's effigy was so realistic that his son, still a child, screamed trying to go into his arms.⁶⁷ At both Pavia and Milan were hunting scenes and exotic animals, beloved of Visconti taste and paralleling the possible Pisanello cycle at Pavia; Bona of Savoy's wedding journey from Amboise to Milan was depicted and in 1473–74 a Relic Chamber was set up, recalling Karlstein.⁶⁸

Recent studies, restorations and exhibitions have increased understanding of this group's activity, which extends from Francesco Sforza until Galeazzo Maria. In the Ducal Chapel at the Castello Sforzesco many painters were at work, but the style of Bonifacio and Benedetto is now clearer.⁶⁹ Zanetto Bugatto is more difficult to define. He is famous for having been sent to Bruges by Bona di Savoia, 1460–1463, to learn Van der Weyden's style. Not, as it was previously believed, the painter of the *Resurrection* in the Ducal Chapel, he is most likely to be identified with the Northern influenced Cagnola Master.⁷⁰ Certainly he was not solely responsible for this trend. Northern painters like the author of the *Christ before Pilate* at Chiaravalle—the possible Hans Witz—worked in Lombardy, exemplifying a supra-regional culture which linked Lombardy with the Rhineland, Switzerland and Savoy.⁷¹ In this, the role of Genoa was very relevant. Milan constantly tried to possess Genoa to secure its access to the sea. From Genoa a peculiar renaissance style permeated with Flemish, Occitan and Catalan features reached Lombardy.⁷²

Genoa brings us back to Vincenzo Foppa, already encountered as a collaborator of the Bembo group. Formed at Brescia, where Gentile da Fabriano and Jacopo Bellini had worked, Foppa found further powerful inspiration in Donatello's and Mantegna's work at Padua and connected Ferrarese developments; then, from 1455 until 1463 ca. he lived and worked in Pavia and Genoa; but starting from 1463 he was in Milan.⁷³ His most important Milanese work is the cycle in Pigello Portinari's burial chapel at Sant'Eustorgio (Fig. 9.9), conceived as a gigantic reliquary for Saint Peter Martyr's head. It followed the

67 Welch, "The image", p. 166; Strehlke, "Li maestri".

68 Albertario, "Ad nostro modo", and "La cappella".

69 Sandrina Bandera, Marco Tanzi, "Due o tre cose sui Bembo, cremonesi", in *Quelle carte de triumph che se fanno a Cremona*, pp. 11–21.

70 Ferdinando Bologna, "Una Madonna lombarda del Quattrocento", *Paragone* 8 (1957), pp. 3–11. The *Resurrection* has been attributed to Stefano de Fedeli, perhaps on a drawing of Benedetto Ferrini who was dealing also with iconography.

71 Perhaps in the 1460s. Federico Cavalieri, "Una nuova presenza oltremontana nella pittura milanese di età sforzesca", *Nuovi studi* 5 (1998), pp. 29–37.

72 Mauro Natale in *Renacimiento mediterraneo* (Madrid, 2001), p. 39 and 426–431.

73 Giovanni Romano, *Rinascimento in Lombardia* (Milan, 2011), pp. 53–101.



FIGURE 9.9 *Milan, Sant'Eustorgio Portinari Chapel. Vincenzo Foppa, Saint Peter Martyr heals a young man.*

Brunelleschian models of the Old Sacristy at San Lorenzo and the Pazzi Chapel at Santa Croce at Florence.⁷⁴ Foppa reveals his Paduan debts unambiguously, providing a turning point for subsequent Lombard figurative culture. His naturalistic observation, his capacity to convey perspective and light and narrative plausibility convinced Roberto Longhi of the logical development from

⁷⁴ Vincenzo Foppa. *La cappella Portinari*, ed. Laura Mattioli Rossi (Milan, 1999).

Trecento 'realism' towards Caravaggesque 'truth'. A genome had been outlined: its analysis still needs discussion.⁷⁵

Leonardo, Bramante, and the End

Around 1480 two crucial events transformed Milanese and Lombard art and culture. Donato Bramante—a conduit for the culture of Laurana, Francesco di Giorgio, and Piero della Francesca—arrived from Urbino.⁷⁶ In 1477 he was at Bergamo, painting the Palazzo del Podestà façade and studying Amadeo's recently completed Colleoni chapel.⁷⁷ Perhaps he visited Mantua, and saw Alberti's and Mantegna's works. Ludovico il Moro had perhaps contacted him on Federico da Montefeltro's advice. Bramante was at Milan around 1480, certainly by 1481, the date of the famous Prevedari engraving where new Ferrarese and Paduan features emerge and also the impact of Filarete.⁷⁸ The young Bartolomeo Suardi, formed as a goldsmith and fascinated by painters like Butinone, soon joined Bramante.⁷⁹

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- 75 Roberto Longhi, "Quesiti caravaggeschi: i precedenti", *Pinacotheca*, 5–6 (1929), pp. 258–320, now in *Me Pinxit" e Quesiti caravaggeschi. 1928–1934* (Opere complete, vol. iv), Firenze 1968, pp. 97–143. Mauro Natale, "Gli anni della cappella Portinari", in *Vincenzo Foppa*, ed. Giovanni Agosti, Mauro Natale, Giovanni Romano (Milan, 2003), pp. 155–157; *Pittori della realtà: le ragioni di una rivoluzione da Foppa a Leonardo a Caravaggio e Ceruti*, ed. Mina Gregori, Andrea Bayer (Cremona-New York, 2004).
- 76 Arnaldo Bruschi, "La formazione e gli esordi di Bramante: dati, ipotesi, problemi", in *Bramante milanese e l'architettura del Rinascimento lombardo*, ed. Cristoph L. Frommel, Luisa Giordano, Richard Schofield (Venice, 2002), pp. 33–66.
- 77 Arnaldo Bruschi, *Bramante* (London-Rome, 1971), pp. 13–38, and Id., "Identità di Bramante. «... al mondo huon singulare...», in *Donato Bramante. Ricerche, proposte, riletture*, ed. Francesco Paolo Di Teodoro (Urbino, 2001), pp. 7–18; Richard Schofield, *Bramante studies: the Milnaese period* (London, 1979); Luciano Patetta, "Bramante architetto a Milano e la sua cerchia (1480–1499)", in *Bramante e la sua cerchia a Milano e in Lombardia (1480–1500)*, ed. Luciano Patetta (Milan, 2001), pp. 13–37; Stefania Buganza, "Qualche considerazione sui primordi di Bramante in Lombardia", *Nuovi studi* 11 (2005), pp. 69–103.
- 78 For the Prevedari engraving, recently Giovanni Agosti, "Bramantino a Milano", in *Bramantino a Milano*, ed. Giovanni Agosti et al. (Milan, 2012), pp. 24–26.
- 79 For Bramantino's possible role in the Treviglio polyptych, commissioned from Butinone and Zenale in 1485, Giovanni Romano, *Un seminario su Bramantino*, in "Concorso", 1, 2007, pp. 39–69, esp. pp. 63–65, and Stefania Buganza, Gianluca Poldi, "Il polittico di Treviglio alla luce del disegno sottostante: impostazione del problema e nuove aperture", *Arte lombarda* 158–159 (2010), pp. 39–68.

Meanwhile, in 1482, Leonardo da Vinci arrived at Milan. Galeazzo Maria had long nurtured the wish to commemorate his father with an equestrian bronze monument dominating Corte Vecchia area. It would echo Azzo's monument nearby, and its ancient equestrian models, the Regisole and Marcus Aurelius.⁸⁰ But the task was too difficult, and no-one, in Lombardy or Tuscany, had been capable of achieving it. After Galeazzo Maria's death, Ludovico persisted in the same dynastic discourse. Leonardo, Verrocchio's pupil, was perhaps sent to Milan by Lorenzo the Magnificent with this aim, and he wrote a proud letter of self-introduction.⁸¹ At Milan, he would work as an engineer, the organizer of court ephemera, he would paint, sketch, write and teach. Yet he never completed the monument although he made drawings and a clay model, exhibited in Corte Vecchia in 1493, and destroyed by French soldiers in 1499.⁸²

The turn which Ludovico looked for in the artistic, but also in literary and historiographic spheres, occurred rapidly.⁸³ Bramante and Leonardo fell under the spell of the Early Christian and medieval Lombard survivals. The medieval sacellum of San Satiro with its Marian icon was the exact site of Bramante's first huge Milanese project, while Leonardo drew the Lombard Santa Maria delle Pertiche at Pavia.⁸⁴ Near San Satiro, Bramante built the church of Santa Maria (documented since 1482, but perhaps earlier), modelled after the Pazzi chapel, but also invented an illusionistic choir (Fig. 9.10), suggesting depth by deceiving the beholder. It developed perspectival schemes from Urbino and, still more, the tremendous skill of Donatello and Mantegna to feign depth and distance in the space of a few millimetres.⁸⁵

80 Laurie Fusco, Gino Corti, "Lorenzo de' Medici on the Sforza Monument", *Achademia Leonardi Vinci* V (1992), pp. 11–32.

81 Luca Beltrami, *Documenti e memorie riguardanti la Vita e le Opere di Leonardo da Vinci* (Milan, 1919), doc. 21, pp. 10–11.

82 Virginia L. Bush, "Leonardo's Sforza Monument and Cinquecento Sculpture", *Arte Lombarda* 50 (1978), pp. 47–68.

83 Gary Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas. Politics and Propaganda in Fifteenth-century Milan* (Oxford, 1988); Paolo Bongrani, *Lingua e letteratura a Milano nell'età sforzesca* (Parma, 1986); Simone Albonico, *Appunti su Ludovico il Moro e le lettere*, in *Ludovicus Dux*, ed. Luisa Giordano (Vigevano, 1995), pp. 66–91.

84 Peter Murray, "Bramante paleocristiano", in *Studi bramanteschi* (Rom, 1974), pp. 27–34; Carlo Pedretti, *Leonardo architetto* (Milan, 1981), p. 52 (for the drawings from Santa Maria delle Pertiche at Pavia, and other Pavian buildings, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France, Ms B, f.55r).

85 Richard Schofield e Grazioso Sironi, "Bramante and the problem of Santa Maria presso San Satiro", *Annali di architettura* 12 (2000), pp. 17–57. Amadeo supplanted Bramante for the façade.



FIGURE 9.10 *Milan, Santa Maria presso San Satiro. Donato Bramante, the choir.*

Leonardo shocked civic visual traditions even more. The first version of the *Virgin of the Rocks* (Paris, Louvre) was painted around 1483 (Fig. 9.11). Leonardo recast current compositional rules by painting a primordial, misty landscape of rocks and water in which the personages gesture enigmatically, adumbrating the complex theme of the Immaculate Conception, beloved of his Franciscan patrons. The Angel's hand, traversing the space between the Virgin and Child, indicates the young Baptist; but—even more—the gestures seem all to converge on the shadowy area, invisible and unspeakable, of Mary's womb.⁸⁶ The second, later version (London, National Gallery), is much less mysterious and more plastic: the 'dark zone' has become blue and solid.⁸⁷ The Angel's hand has vanished. The first version's vertiginous suggested meanings were the fruit of psychological thoughts and emotions expressed through a very complex and integrated compositional system. This perception has been diluted in the second version, where his workshop's intervened, and the *mise-en-scène* is simpler and easier, the *chiaroscuro* system more comprehensible in its dialectic of volumes and landscape.⁸⁸

The modern manner had arrived. Bramante and Leonardo were friends, and together spent time in Gaspare Visconti's house, where, around 1487, *Warriors* and *Philosophers* were commissioned from Bramante but painted partly by Bramantino.⁸⁹ Both Bramante and Leonardo appear at the Cathedral, where Bramante judged the projects for the *tiburio*, for which also Giuliano da Sangallo and Francesco di Giorgio had been summoned; Leonardo's project was paid but—again—never delivered and completed.⁹⁰ He was the ducal artist, and did not participate in big public works of those years, in voluntary

86 As a start *Leonardo da Vinci. Painter at the Court of Milan*, ed. Luke Syson, The National Gallery (London, 2011), pp. 161–175.

87 John Shearman, "Leonardo's Colour and Chiaroscuro", *Zeischrift für Kunstgeschichte* 25 (1962), pp. 13–47.

88 Generally, it is believed that both the paintings were made for San Francesco Grande, the first having been refused or re-utilized, the second made some years later to replace it. Alessandro Ballarin, "Le due versioni delle Vergini delle Rocce", in Id., *Pittura del Rinascimento nell'Italia Settentrionale*, (Milan, 2010), 1, pp. 65–262, proposed that the first version was made for San Gottardo, the second for San Francesco Grande.

89 Romano, "Un seminario", pp. 62–63; Richard Schofield, "Gaspare Visconti mecenate del Bramante", in *Arte, committenza ed economia a Roma e nelle corti del Rinascimento*, ed. Arnold Esch-Christoph Luitpold Frommel (Turin, 1995), pp. 297–330.

90 Richard Schofield, "Amadeo, Bramante and Leonardo and the tiburio of Milan Cathedral", *Achademia Leonardi Vinci* 2 (1989), pp. 68–100; Francesco P. Di Teodoro, "Due temi bramanteschi: l'*Opinio* e l'incompiuta monografia di Barbot, Benois e Trierry", in *Donato Bramante*, pp. 83–142; Mauro Pavesi, "Ambrogio Bergognone e l'*Opinio* di Bramante per



FIGURE 9.11 Paris, Louvre. Leonardo da Vinci, *the Virgin of the Rocks*.

isolation training his pupils meticulously. Contemporaneously he painted his revolutionary portraits, the *Musician* (Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana), *Cecilia Gallerani* or *The lady with an Ermine* (Cracow, Czartoryski Museum), and the *Belle Ferronière*, perhaps Lucrezia Crivelli (Paris, Louvre). They completely

il Duomo di Milano", *Arte lombarda* 157 (2010), pp. 5–16; and Carlo Pedretti, *Leonardo architetto* (Milan, 1978).



FIGURE 9.12 Milan, Santa Maria delle Grazie. Leonardo da Vinci, Last Supper.

subvert the heraldic fixity of precedent court portraiture, and developed the theme that obsessed him: the *moto mentale*, the fugitive dynamic of mind and soul reflected in bodies and gestures.⁹¹

This preoccupation found its peak in the *Last Supper* at Santa Maria delle Grazie (Fig. 9.12). Around 1490, Ludovico began to think of this Dominican church as a potential mausoleum for his wife Beatrice and himself. Guiniforte Solari's sanctuary was demolished, and reconstructed on a trefoil plan as an Early Christian sacellum. Bramante, the project's author, had eventually to accommodate Amadeo.⁹² But in the refectory, beginning in 1494, Leonardo painted his immense scene dissolving the wall and suggesting a daunting vista which culminates in a blue serene landscape. The limit between the beholder's

91 The basic information and bibliography in Pietro C. Marani, *Leonardo. Una carriera di pittore* (Milan, 1999), pp. 158–187, and Syson, *Leonardo*, pp. 95–97, 111–113, 123–127, also for the related drawings.

92 Grazioso Sironi, "Novità documentarie: l'Amadeo ed il tiburio di Santa Maria delle Grazie di Milano", *Arte lombarda* 78 (1986), pp. 41–58. Also for the other Bramante's architectures and projects at Milan, Pavia and Vigevano, Giordano, "Milano", pp. 187–194.

eye and the metaphysical rhythm of the painted architecture is the line with Christ and the Apostles, and the table with the eucharistic Food. Mental states ("i moti dell'animo") animate the Apostles at the dramatic moment of both treason and the institution of the Eucharist. It reverberates from the absolutely calm Christ concentrated on his eucharistic gesture through the Apostles gathered in groups of three.⁹³ The table with its food is tangible and real, the towel marked by dramatic folds like Rogier Van der Weyden's. The devotional value of this visual edge is palpable, a key passage towards Salvation as demonstrated by the Eucharist.

Bramante and Leonardo's presence at Milan radically changed local rules and language, as had Giotto two centuries earlier. Only the old Foppa, in retirement at Brescia apparently ignored these novelties. Ambrogio Bergognone on the contrary, first formed in a Ligurian, Provencal, French culture and stylistically linked to Foppa worked at the Pavian Charterhouse from 1489, painting altarpieces which betray the growing impact of Bramante and Bramantino's perspective and monumentality.⁹⁴ In the transept and sacristy frescoes of 1492–94ca., the visual aggressiveness and plasticity have a devotional function, and also confer extreme immediacy to the dynastic ducal portraits scattered in the semi-domes. They would be unthinkable without Bramante's (and Bramantino's) paradigm.⁹⁵ The most orthodox Sforza painter, the so-called Maestro della Pala Sforzesca, in his celebrated altarpiece for Sant'Ambrogio ad Nemus commissioned by Ludovico in 1494–1495 (Fig. 9.13), used in turn Leonardesque *sfumato* and physiognomies while remaining partially Foppesque.⁹⁶ Around 1500 also Zenale underwent to a deep Leonardesque conversion.⁹⁷

93 Leo Steinberg, "Leonardo's Last Supper", *Art Quarterly* 36 (1973), pp. 297–410; Ludwig H. Heydenreich, *Leonardo: the Last Supper* (London, 1974) Chreighton Gilbert, "Last Suppers and their Refectories", in *The pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion* (Leiden, 1974), pp. 371–407; Jack Wassermann, "Reflections on the "Last Supper" of Leonardo", *Arte lombarda* 66(1983), pp. 15–34; Leo Steinberg, *Leonardo Incessant Last Supper* (New York, 2001).

94 *Ambrogio Bergognone. Acquisizioni, scoperte e restauri*, ed. Pietro C. Marani e Janice Shell (Florence, 1989. Bergognone could have been formed at Vigevano in Zanetto Bugatto's workshop, a conduit for Spanish/Flemish elements which Bugatto also absorbed at Bruges from Bermejo.

95 *Ambrogio da Fossano detto il Bergognone. Un pittore per la Certosa*, ed. Gianni Carlo Sciollo (Milan, 1998).

96 Giovanni Romano, *Il Maestro della Pala Sforzesca*, Quaderni di Brera, 4 (Florence, 1978).

97 *Zenale e Leonardo*, ed. Pier Francesco Porzio (Milan, 1982).



FIGURE 9.13 *Milan, Brera. Maestro della Pala Sforzesca, Madonna with saints, Ludovico il Moro and his family (from Sant'Ambrogio ad Nemus).*

But Leonardo had scarcely begun his Sala delle Asse in the Castello Sforzesco—a revolutionary project demonstrating architecture's natural origins—when in 1499 Ludovico's flight shattered this incredibly dense moment.⁹⁸ Leonardo returned to Florence via Mantua and Venice and Bramante left definitively for Rome. Leonardo returned to Milan in 1506 and stayed until 1513 in a city now dominated by Gian Giacomo Trivulzio and his patronage.⁹⁹

98 On the Sala delle Asse, still under restoration, Marco Collareta, "Gotik in der Renaissance. Divagazioni sulla 'Sala delle Asse' ", in *Saggi di lettura architettónica*, ed Howard Burns, Francesco P. Di Teodoro and Giorgio Bacci (Florence, 2010), pp. 133–138.

99 Edoardo Villata, "Secondo periodo a Milano", in *Leonardo da Vinci. La vera immagine*, ed. Vanna Arrighi et al. (Florence, 2005), pp. 210–228.

The events of these critical times excite great scholarly interest today.¹⁰⁰ French Milan is deeply permeated by Leonardism, obviously because of his actual presence after 1506 and because of his works displayed in the city. But also because of his pupils, many of them appreciated and influential, like Boltraffio or Marco d'Oggiono. They copied Leonardo's works, and through continuous exercise and drawing displayed a common style.¹⁰¹ Bramantino, in the *Argo* at the Castello Sforzesco (1490 ca.) an orthodox follower of Bramante, became much more atmospheric. In the *Crucifixion* and in the *Holy Family*, both in the Brera, and also in the *Madonna with Saint Ambrose and Saint Michael Archangel* (Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana) (Fig. 9.14) a perspectival rhetoric deriving from Mantegna and Bramante is used to express complex iconologies.¹⁰² Bramantino made the Twelve Months tapestries for Gian Giacomo Trivulzio (1503–1509 ca.), who commissioned Leonardo to create another bronze equestrian monument, which Leonardo—as always—drew but never executed.¹⁰³ Trivulzio thus changed his mind and abandoned the equestrian monument in favour of a proper funerary chapel, which he entrusted to Bramantino in 1512. It was built as a galilee in front of San Nazaro, a severe octagonal structure of arches and niches, surrounded by family sarcophagi.¹⁰⁴ Amidst chaotic political upheaval, with the French general Gaston de Foix killed in 1512 after the catastrophic conquest of Brescia and the Swiss fighting the French, in 1522 the Sforza precariously returned, Agostino Busti ('Bambaia') created many masterful sculptures, the best for Gaston de Foix's tomb (Fig. 9.15). His remains had provisionally been 'suspended' between the columns in the cathedral choir as in older Visconti models; the tomb, made 1512–1522 ca., is a wonderful

100 See for instance *Le duché de Milan et le commanditaires français (1499–1521)*, ed. Frédéric Elsig and Claudia Gaggetta, forthcoming.

101 The Cenacolo was copied by Bramantino in 1503 and by Marco d'Oggiono in 1506, on French commissions. On Leonardo's workshop and collaborators, very useful are *I leonardeschi. L'eredità di Leonardo in Lombardia*, ed. Francesco Porzio (Milan, 1998); *I leonardeschi a Milano: fortuna e collezionismo*, ed. Maria Teresa Fiorio, Pietro Marani (Milan, 1991); Pietro C. Marani, *I leonardeschi a Brera* (Florence, 1987); and Wilhelm Suida, *Leonardo und sein Kreis* (Munich, 1929).

102 Recently *Bramantino a Milano*, ed. Giovanni Agosti, Jacopo Stoppa, Marco Tanzi (Milan, 2012).

103 Recently Giovanni Agosti, Jacopo Stoppa, *I Mesi del Bramantino* (Milan, 2012), with some new thoughts about the chronology. Marino Viganò, "Gian Giacomo Trivulzio e Leonardo. Appunti su una committenza (1482–1518)", *Raccolta vinciana* XXXIV (2011), pp. 1–52.

104 Giuseppe Stolfi, "Riflessioni sulla cappella Trivulzio in San Nazaro a Milano", in *Aspetti dell'abitare e del costruire a Roma e in Lombardia tra XV e XIX secolo*, ed. Augusto Rossari, Aurora Scotti (Milan, 2005), pp. 279–295.

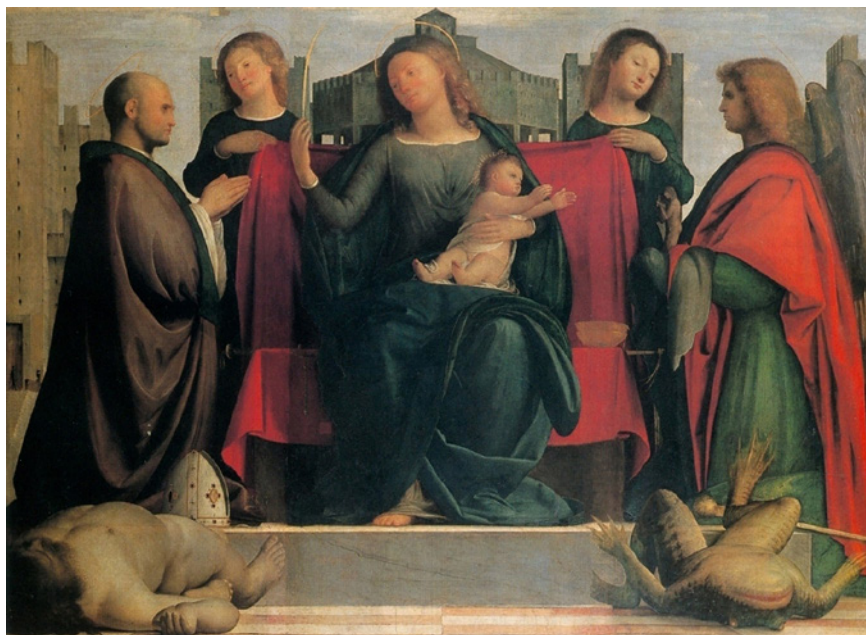


FIGURE 9.14 *Milan, Pinacoteca Ambrosiana. Bramantino, Madonna with Saint Ambrose and Saint Michael Archangel (from San Michele dei Disciplini).*



FIGURE 9.15 *Milan, Castello Sforzesco. Agostino Busti, il Bambaia, funerary monument of Gaston de Foix (from Santa Marta, Milan).*

amalgam of classicism and Leonardesque modernism. Although mutilated by later vandalism it partly survives at the Castello Sforzesco.¹⁰⁵

Lombard artists travel to Rome in pursuit of the Antique. Bramantino and Cesare da Sesto both visit Rome in 1508, while Leonardo went in 1513, leaving Milan forever. When Leonardo died at Amboise in 1519, Francesco Melzi and Salaì returned to Milan with all his goods and works, which stimulated another wave of Leonardism.¹⁰⁶ Its foremost interpreter, during the short Sforzesque revival under Francesco II after 1522, was Bernardino Luini, educated under the aegis of Bramantino. In 1512 he painted the Chiaravalle *Madonna* enthroned, and in 1516 the splendid *Lamentation* and *Crowning with Thorns* at San Giorgio al Palazzo; in the 1520s he frescoed in San Maurizio Maggiore. The virtuoso *Crucifixion* on the *tramezzo* at Santa Maria degli Angeli at Lugano was painted in 1529.¹⁰⁷ But a weakened Milan lacked strong political government and cultural capacity. Around the time of Spanish conquest (1535) Piedmontese painters led by Gaudenzio Ferrari occupied centre stage, while Venetian works and painters dominated the market and public taste. Lombard history had reached a watershed.

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¹⁰⁵ Id., *Bambaia e il classicismo lombardo* (Turin, 1990).

¹⁰⁶ On Lombard artists travelling to Rome mainly in 1508 and 1514, Giovanni Agosti, "Sul gusto per l'antico a Milano, tra regime sforzesco e dominazione francese", *Prospettiva* 49 (1987), pp. 33–46. A good synthesis on these decades is Francesco Frangi, "Una traccia per la storia della pittura a Milano dal 1499 al 1535", in *Pittura a Milano*, pp. 23–36.

¹⁰⁷ In anticipation of the monograph announced by Cristina Quattrini, on Luini see recently Maria Teresa Binaghi Olivari, *Bernardino Luini* (Milan, 2007) and Pietro C. Marani, *Bernardino Luini. Una carriera di pittore e un dipinto inedito* (Varese, 2007), with different chronologies. On Francesco II, Rossana Sacchi, *Il disegno incompiuto. La politica artistica di Francesco II Sforza e di Massimiliano Stampa* (Milan, 2005).

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The Arts Under the Spanish Rulers (1535–1706)

Alessandro Morandotti

The passage of the Duchy of Milan to Charles V guaranteed that territory a long-lasting spell of peace; from that moment, the Hapsburgs, firstly of Spain, and later from 1707 of Austria, controlled the ‘gateway to Italy’ with skilful politics of collaboration and coexistence with the local noble classes, as has been clearly stated by historians for some time, in the wake of the studies by Federico Chabod on the age of Charles V and Philip II. The new social and political balance of power made Milan and the cities of the early Duchy more open to the requests of patrons and collectors from outside the area, who were often political figures from various cities within the State but also from other areas of Italy and Europe, immediately placing at risk the privileged power of local artists. Events in art history under the Hapsburgs need to be studied by attempting to understand the dynamics of the emerging competition between local artists and the artists and works that came in from outside, and between resistance and acceptance, as emphasized not only by the stylistic choices of native Lombard artists but also by the defensive response of local literature. Nor should we forget the professional opportunities that opened up for Lombard artists outside the city walls, as there were many who were attracted to territories under Hapsburg influence throughout Europe (from Madrid to Vienna, Munich and Prague) or, on the other hand, were commissioned to produce works for export, particularly in the market for luxury goods (jewellery, crystal, suits of armour, fabrics and goldsmiths’ work) that had been the pride of the Lombard capital since the Middle Ages. It is useful to give a chronological overview of the slice of history I am briefly discussing in these pages, by highlighting those moments that are considered to have been turning points while at the same time providing an up-to-date historiographical frame of reference.

1535–1564: The New State and the Shockwave of the ‘forestieri’

The arrival of Titian’s *Crowning with Thorns* (Fig. 10.1) in Santa Maria delle Grazie (1543), a spectacular statement of the Venetian artist’s ability to combine his expertise in the outstanding models of ancient art (in this case, the Laocoön)

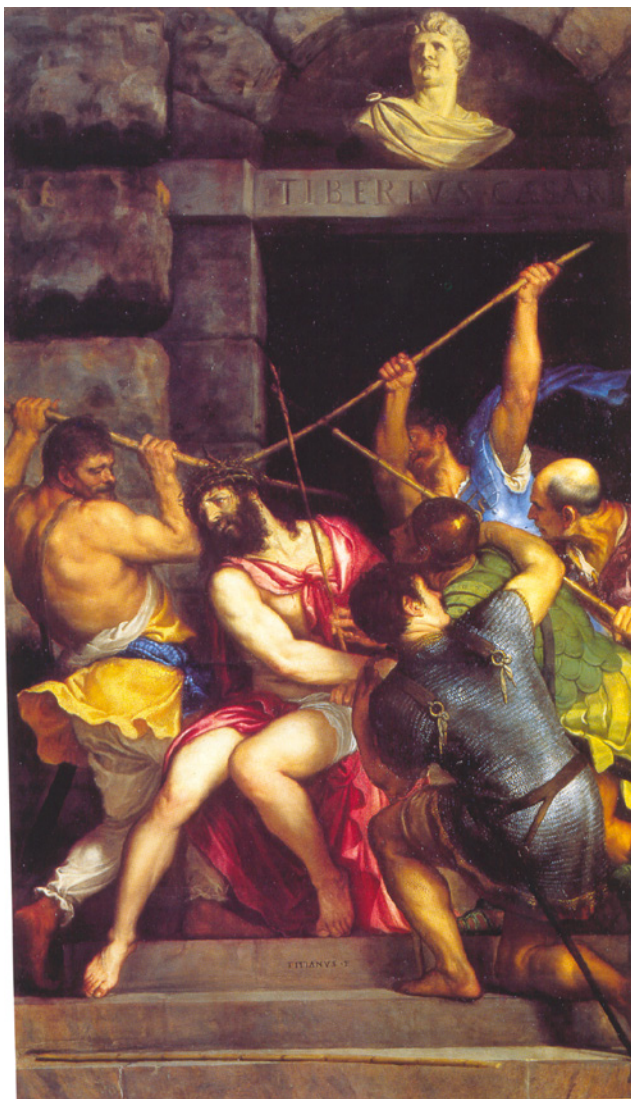


FIGURE 10.1 *Titian, Crowning with Thorns, c. 1540–1542. Paris, Musée du Louvre (formerly Milan, Santa Maria delle Grazie).*

that were dear to painters of the *maniera moderna* with the chromatic tradition of his homeland, was long-awaited. Active for the Este and the Gonzaga courts before becoming the favoured painter of Charles V and his entourage at the beginning of the 1540s, Titian had also been approached by Duke Francesco II Sforza, of whom he had painted a portrait in about 1530, now only

known through early copies.¹ Attempts at renewal on the part of the last Sforza duke were not therefore lacking, since his eyes were turned not only to Venice and its mainland but also towards Parma, and specifically Correggio.² The centrality newly acquired by Milan in the era of Charles v, however, made it far easier to obtain whatever one desired. The initiatives of a military leader loyal to Charles v, the Spaniard Alfonso d'Avalos, Marquis del Vasto and Governor of the State of Milan from 1538, illustrate this climate.³ In addition to having probably encouraged the arrival of the *Crowning with Thorns* by Titian, who had already portrayed him as a faithful soldier of the Empire in two famous portraits of 1533 (Getty Museum, Los Angeles) and 1539 (Prado, Madrid), the Marquis del Vasto coordinated the decorations for Charles v's entrance into Milan in 1541, under the direction of Giulio Romano. The triumphal arches of the painter and architect who had studied in Rome under Raphael, animated with allegorical figures and references to antiquity, introduced the Mannerism of central Italy into the Lombard city, which thus found itself at the nexus of new artistic idioms.⁴

One artist strongly attracted to this environment was Gaudenzio Ferrari, the painter from Valsesia drawn to Milan from Vercelli (in Savoy territory) thanks to the ambitions of Francesco II Sforza, who may have admired Gaudenzio's work at the Sacro Monte di Varallo, a place of pilgrimage central to Milanese society and the Sforza dynasty since the end of the fifteenth century. In about 1533, the last duke personally appointed Gaudenzio to decorate the interior of the cathedral of Vigevano, a project close to his heart, while at the same time planning to engage him for the sanctuary at Saronno,⁵ where in 1534 Gaudenzio took over from Bernardino Luini, who had died in 1532 without seeing the inauguration of the cupola. At the time, only Gaudenzio could match the recently deceased Leonardesque painter for his expression of *affetti* and smoothness of handling. Active in Milan Cathedral in 1537, Gaudenzio was later summoned to the more prominent role—ideally competing with Titian—of decorating the chapel of the Confraternity of Santa Corona in Santa Maria delle Grazie. However, Gaudenzio's gentle tones were not, perhaps, enough

1 Rossana Sacchi, *Il disegno incompiuto. La politica artistica di Francesco II Sforza e di Massimiliano Stampa*, 2 vol., (Milan, 2005), I, pp. 65–67.

2 Ibid., pp. 63–69.

3 See *Omaggio a Tiziano. La cultura artistica milanese nell'età di Carlo v*, exhibition catalogue (Milan, 1977), *passim*; in particular, Giulio Bora, "La cultura figurativa a Milano, 1535–1565", therein, pp. 46–47.

4 Bora, "La cultura figurativa", pp. 54–55.

5 Sacchi, *Il disegno incompiuto*, I, pp. 200–209.



FIGURE 10.2 Gaudenzio Ferrari, *Saint Paul in His Study*, 1543. *Lyon, Musée des Beaux Arts* (formerly *Milan, Santa Maria delle Grazie*).

for patrons who were soon attracted to the dramatically urgent handling and colour of Titian. Gaudenzio's frescoes (documented in payments of January to December 1542) frame Titian's altarpiece, begun in the following year, but are very badly damaged and hard to read. Nonetheless, his language at this time, and in that particular site, can be judged from the painting of *Saint Paul in His Study* (Musée des Beaux Arts, Lyon; Fig. 10.2), designed in 1543 for a chapel in

Santa Maria delle Grazie. The deliberate theatricality of Saint Paul's pose and the evocation of the Classical world in the background, with a landscape punctuated with ancient ruins, betray the shift towards Mannerism adopted by the painter, which in this instance is more akin to the model of Giulio Romano than to that of Titian.⁶

Despite soon being considered among the 'invaders' by the Milanese masters, the Campi brothers of Cremona—Giulio (the oldest, born in 1507/1508), Antonio, and Vincenzo, alongside their homonymous compatriot Bernardino (who seems to have been unrelated)—were employed over the course of the 1500s in public and private projects in Milan and in many other cities of the State, spreading the innovations of Mannerism.⁷ Trained through his experience in Cremona Cathedral, one of the most evolved projects in the Po Valley region between the first and second quarters of the century, Giulio Campi worked alongside Camillo Boccaccino (who had studied under Titian in Venice) to decorate the triumphal arches used to mark the passage of Charles V through Cremona in 1541. At the time, Cremona was the second capital of the State, and the artistic geniuses of the city, equipped with the innovations of Titian, Pordenone, Parmigianino, and Giulio Romano, could undertake that delicate work of courtly welcome without recourse to artists from outside, unlike, of course, the experience of Milan that same year in the construction of its ephemeral decorations for the arrival of the Imperial sovereign.

One project that was particularly open to foreign stimuli and constantly at the cutting edge of artistic innovation was slowly taking shape in the church of Santa Maria presso San Celso in Milan. The radiating apsidal chapels built between 1540 and 1560 formed a veritable modern gallery of artists hailing from various places in Spanish Lombardy (Callisto Piazza from Lodi, Gaudenzio Ferrari from Valsesia, and Antonio Campi from Cremona), but also from territories in the Republic of Venice (Moretto from Brescia, Carlo Urbino from Crema, and the Treviso native Paris Bordon, a pupil of Titian much appreciated in Milan for both his public and private works).⁸

6 On the Mannerist shift in Gaudenzio: Giovanni Romano, "Gaudenzio Ferrari", in *Gaudenzio Ferrari e la sua scuola. I cartoni cinquecenteschi dell'Accademia Albertina* exhibition catalogue (Turin 1982), pp. 61–64. For the historical framework: Rossana Sacchi, "Ferrari, Gaudenzio", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, XLVI (Rome, 1996), pp. 573–581; Giulio Bora, "Fra tradizione, maniera e classicismo riformato (1535–1595)", in *Pittura a Milano. Rinascimento e manierismo* (I centri della pittura lombarda) M. Gregori, ed. XIII (Milan, 1998), pp. 52–66.

7 For a summary of many of his discussions on the theme see: Giulio Bora, "Manierismo cremonese", in *Lombardia manierista. Arti e architettura*, Maria Teresa Fiorio e Valerio Terraroli eds., (Milan, 2009), pp. 155–193; see also Marco Tanzi, *I Campi* (Milano, 2004).

8 Bora, "Fra tradizione", pp. 54–55.

At the same time, in Como, a very ambitious and truly international initiative was being created by an intellectual who was sought after by the most important Italian courts. Between 1537 and 1543, at the behest of the governor of the time, Alfonso d'Avalos, who also partially financed the endeavour, Paolo Giovio created his *Museo* on the shore of Lake Como, where a villa belonging to Pliny the Younger had once stood. Giovio here displayed his own collection of portraits of illustrious people, and this collection, whose value was far more than iconographical when the quality of the works is considered, comprised, among others, paintings by Mantegna, Titian, Dosso Dossi, Amico Aspertini, Bronzino, and Francesco Salviati, and originated as a necessary complement to his literary activities leading to the publication of his *Elogia* of illustrious men.⁹ Amongst the first copyists sent to Como from the courts of Europe in order to record Giovio's collection was Bernardino Campi, who arrived in 1554 on the invitation of the family of the new Governor of Milan, Ferrante Gonzaga, the successor of d'Avalos upon his death in 1546. Gonzaga, the last Italian governor of Spanish Lombardy, was a military man who employed military engineers to overhaul the border defences with Savoyard Piedmont and to provide Milan with a belt of defensive fortresses linked to the Castle.¹⁰ At the same time, Gonzaga surrounded himself with a veritable court of scholars, artists, and musicians, with the assistance of his family members: his wife Isabella di Capua invited Bernardino Campi to Milan in 1550, and it was his daughter Ippolita's idea to use this artist as the copyist for Giovio's works. Bernardino celebrated Ippolita in a portrait, now untraced, as is true of many portraits of prominent courtly figures in Lombard society at the time painted by Bernardino and recorded in the early celebratory biography of the artist published by Alessandro Lamo in 1584. Bernardino's talent was to be transmitted to another artist from Cremona, Sofonisba Anguissola, although she painted her moving portraits from the heart. The record of Lamo reminds us of Bernardino's art scattered in many noble houses and villas that Bernardino had frescoed with secular themes in what we must imagine (since so many of these works are missing) as reflecting the most spectacular inventions of Mannerism.

At that time, passion for the villa was celebrated in a literary work by Bartolomeo Taegio, *La villa* (1559), its pages teeming with the first and last names of all of Lombard high society, with its roots in Milan and in the other cities of

9 Barbara Agosti, *Paolo Giovio. Uno storico lombardo nella cultura artistica del Cinquecento* (Florence, 2008), pp. 37–40.

10 Aurora Scotti Tosini, "Progetti e realizzazioni: l'aggiornamento delle difese nella Lombardia spagnola", in *Lombardia manierista*, pp. 113–131.

the State. Taegio's work provides evidence that the way was being paved for a transition from city life to life in the villa, a place defined by secure income and noble identity, but also by humanist *otium*, marked by hunting trips, cultivated conversations and large gardens rich in grottoes, fountains, fishing lakes, rare plants and collections of statues. The recently deceased interfering governor, Ferrante Gonzaga (d. 1557), had been relieved of his position in 1554, leaving the space open to the splendour of a wide group of local powers with whom the kings of Spain, from Philip II onwards, developed with increasing conviction a policy of collaboration and neighbourliness. With Paolo Giovio at his side as iconographical prompter and guarantor of fidelity to Classical architectural models, Ferrante Gonzaga, shortly after being elected as governor in 1546, arranged for ambitious transformations to a late-fifteenth-century villa on the outskirts of Milan called la Gualtiera. He entrusted the project to the Tuscan architect Domenico Giunti, who trained at Rome with Baldassarre Peruzzi, and also made use of the sculptures of Leone Leoni, who had been called to Milan in 1542 by the governor Alfonso d'Avalos as sculptor for coinage at the Mint. Leoni himself, as a letter written by him to Gonzaga in 1549 shows, had envisaged for la Gualtiera the rendering in bronze of the series of casts taken of the most important statues in Rome carried out by Primaticcio for the king of France between 1540 and 1545. The project was never completed; after having been admired by Giorgio Vasari in the house of Leone Leoni in Milan during his study visit of 1566 (just prior to his second edition of the *Lives of Artists*), that collection of casts used to reproduce Classical sculptures, both sacred and secular (and ranging from antiquity to modern times, given the presence of works by Michelangelo), became the object of study for the artists of the *Accademia Ambrosiana* established by Cardinal Federico Borromeo in 1618.¹¹

The house of Leone Leoni could almost be considered as a Mannerist rereading of classical architecture,¹² and stood next to the monumental abode of the Genoese banker Tommaso Marino. Marino's home was the building that, in around 1560, represented the most up-to-date project in the city: and the workforce for this enormous undertaking was almost exclusively from outside Milan. After working in Genoa, Galeazzo Alessi, an architect from Perugia who had been trained in Rome under Antonio da Sangallo and was soon active

11 I recall my own work here, Alessandro Morandotti, *Milano profana nell'età dei Borromeo* (Milan, 2005), pp. 27–32. On Ferrante Gonzaga's villa see: Nicola Soldini, *Nec spe nec metu. La Gonzaga: architettura e corte nella Milano di Carlo V* (Florence, 2005).

12 Aurora Scotti Tosini, "La "bella maniera": architetti, committenti, teoria e forma dell'architettura tra Roma e Milano nel Cinquecento", in *Lombardia manierista* (cit. above, n. 7), p. 75.



FIGURE 10.3 *Milan, Palazzo Marino: stucco and fresco decorations of the so-called Sala dell'Alessi (in a photo before 1943 air raids).*

in architectural planning, came to Milan. The compactness of the quadrangular structure of Palazzo Marino is impressive as is the variety of architectural orders and of decorative elements on the façades and in the spacious courtyard. Alessi's solutions were immediately echoed in the structure of the Palazzo dei Giureconsulti, a building commissioned by Pius IV de' Medici (pope from 1559 to 1565) for his native territory, and the work of the Milanese architect Vincenzo Seregna, spellbound by Alessi, who had studied in Rome at the time of Raphael and Giulio Romano.¹³ Photographs illustrating the original quality of the grand *Sala dell'Alessi* in the Palazzo Marino (Fig. 10.3), taken before the building was damaged by bombs in 1943, show the original sumptuousness of the building. These images allow us to see the layout of the immense vaulted ceiling laden with expressive protruding stucco work alternating with reliefs, frescoes and terracotta busts.¹⁴

13 Aurora Scotti, "Per un profilo dell'architettura milanese (1535–1565)", in *Omaggio a Tiziano*, pp. 103–105.

14 Susanna Zanuso, "Le Veneri Borromeo: Annibale Fontana e Giovanni Antonio Abondio", *Nuovi Studi*, 11 (2005), pp. 163–176; on frescoes, Giulio Bora, "Nota su Ottavio Semino a Milano e la sua produzione disegnativa", in *Per Luigi Grassi: disegno e disegni*, Anna Forlani Tempesti e Simonetta Prosperi Valenti Rodinò eds., (Rimini, 1998), pp. 169–171;

If Alessi's project may have seemed—in Spanish Milan of the third quarter of the century—a re-interpretation of the solutions found by Perino del Vaga in Rome or Genoa, or of Rosso Fiorentino and Primaticcio at Fontainebleau, Leone Leoni's neighbouring house functioned on a dual level. With the accuracy of antiquity and the dimensions of the internal courtyard, there was space on the façade for gigantic, almost savage architectural telamones sculpted by Abbondio with an almost hyperbolic vigour reminiscent of Michelangelo. Michelangelo was much talked about in Milan at that time, given that pope Pius IV of the Milanese Medici initially thought of him to create the funerary monument destined to remember, in the most important church of his hometown, his brothers Gian Giacomo and Gabriele. When it proved too difficult to secure a commission from a much sought-after artist, Pius turned to Leone Leoni (Fig. 10.4), perhaps at the suggestion of the great Florentine himself, or of his *creato*, Tommaso de' Cavalieri.¹⁵ This was almost a permit for Leoni to present himself in Milan as the best substitute for Michelangelo, who remained distant from Northern Italian projects.

We have already seen that Leone Leoni collaborated with Ferrante Gonzaga in his private initiatives, for which he also coordinated the early commissions for the commemorative portraits of the Hapsburgs (from 1547). His work as a sculptor, influenced as it was by the highly-sought-after models of Michelangelo and his early followers (especially Jacopo Sansovino), did not make inroads into Milan, neither was it present in the most conservative and prestigious project in the city: the Cathedral. It was only the authority of the Milanese Medici pope, Pius IV, who initially guided his nephew Carlo Borromeo in the Roman Curia, who requested the memorable presence of a series of bronze statues destined for the funerary monument dedicated to his relatives and executed between 1560 and 1563. The sepulchre (fig.10.4), located in the right transept of the Cathedral, is a true masterpiece from many points of view: the structure of ancient columns in white and black marble, brought from Rome in 1561, interacts with the modern columns in local red stone, giving life to an animated celebratory arch, worthy of an ephemeral triumphal structure;¹⁶ in the

Barbara Agosti, "Lungo la Paullese/2 (verso Milano)", in *Quattro pezzi lombardi (per Maria Teresa Binaghi)* (Brescia, 1998), p. 130.

15 Walter Cupperi, "Leoni, Leone", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, LXIV (Rome, 2005), pp. 594–598; on the possible role of Tommaso de' Cavalieri, Barbara Agosti, *Michelangelo. Amici e maestranze* (I grandi maestri dell'arte. L'artista e il suo tempo), 7 (Florence, 2007), p. 140.

16 Luisa Giordano, "Marmi antichi e marmi moderni" in *Lombardia manierista*, pp. 229–233. On the monument and Leone Leoni in Milan see: Maria Teresa Franco Fiorio e Anna



FIGURE 10.4 *Leone Leoni, Funerary Monument of Gian Giacomo Medici, 1560–1564. Milan, Duomo.*

lower order, the allegorical figures of military virtue and peace are envisaged as seated, in distinctly different poses, at the feet of the independent figure of the *condottiero*, which occupies a niche in the centre of the mausoleum. Beneath him, the beautiful, docile figure of Peace seems to want to avert her gaze from that imperious figure, as her body is slightly turned and clearly modelled on almost contemporary Imperial images such as *Charles V Subduing Fury* (1549–1553) and *Philip II* (1549–1564), the latter carried out by Leoni with the collaboration of his son Pompeo; the sculptures, cast and mostly executed in Milan, are now in the Prado Museum, Madrid.¹⁷

The Medici monument had thrown Milan Cathedral into disarray. This was a very traditional building project in which the latest novelties of Mannerism struggled to assert themselves against the tenacious defense of Classicizing language that characterized the work of Bambaia, who was very active in the church's construction until his death in 1548. Bambaia was the last surviving member of a group of sculptors devoted to the Classical tradition who monopolized sculptural projects in Lombardy in the late 1400s and early 1500s: Amadeo, Cristoforo Solari and finally Andrea Fusina, who all died within a short time of each other, between 1522 and 1526.¹⁸

The defense of this local tradition, defined by a measured Classicism, can be felt if we consider the choice of another artist called to Milan by Ferrante Gonzaga, the sculptor Angelo Marini, known as 'il Siciliano' (he had come to Ferrante's attention of while he was Viceroy in Sicily). Trained by the Gagini in Palermo, he soon integrated himself into the most traditional projects in the North, such as Milan Cathedral and the Certosa di Pavia. It is hardly fortuitous that in the evocative overview of Italian sculpture in the first half of the sixteenth century written by Adolfo Venturi in his *Storia dell'arte italiana*, the profile of Angelo Marini nestles neatly among those of Cristoforo Solari, Bambaia and others. In order to be accepted by Milanese patrons, Marini often disguised himself as a local artist of the Classical tradition; in his work in the Certosa di Pavia (1552–1559), he readopted some of Cristoforo Solari's language

Patrizia Valerio, "La scultura a Milano tra il 1535 e il 1565: alcuni problemi", in *Omaggio a Tiziano*, pp. 129–130.

- 17 Cupperi, "Leoni, Leone"; Walter Cupperi, "Leoni, Pompeo", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, LXIV (Roma, 2005), pp. 610–612; Id., " 'Leo faciebat', 'Leo et Pompeius fecerunt': autorità multipla e transculturalità nei ritratti leoniani del Prado", in *Leone & Pompeo Leoni*, Proceedings of the International Symposium (Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado, October 2011), Stephan F. Schröder ed. (Madrid, 2012), pp. 66–84.
- 18 For the context, Franco Fiorio e Valerio, "La scultura", pp. 124–130; Giovanni Agosti, *Bambaia e il classicismo lombardo* (Turin, 1990) pp. 171–199.

from the Cathedral in Milan, to the extent that until very recently there was a tendency to confuse some of the works of these two artists, although they are at least two generations apart.¹⁹ Despite these circumstances, there was no lack of attempts to modernize the *fabbrica* of the Cathedral, not least due to the beneficial presence of Cristoforo Lombardi, a sculptor and architect (the title with which he took charge of the *Fabbrica* in 1526) who was curious about many of the works being undertaken in Central Italy. It was Lombardi who called the Tuscan sculptor Silvio Cosini to work at the Cathedral in 1544 for a brief but significant commission (noted by Giorgio Vasari in his *Lives of Artists*).²⁰ Furthermore, it may well have been Lombardi who had the idea of overseeing the Cathedral début of Guglielmo della Porta, the author of a rediscovered *Prophet* of immense expressive power and dynamism; the sculpture has been dated to about 1535, a fateful year because of political changes in the city.²¹ The presence of works by such men as Della Porta and Cosini in the Cathedral are flashes of brilliance in the overcast sky of its stylistic conservatism, and did nothing to change the overall climate of the building.

1565–1584: Carlo Borromeo and the New Role of the Church

The jumbled vitality that had characterized the arts in the State of Milan over the first few decades of Spanish rule, found new order thanks to the will of Carlo Borromeo, the nephew of pope Pius IV and future saint, called in 1564 to oversee one of the largest archdiocese in the whole of the Italian peninsula. The Milanese cardinal was to spend most of his life committed to the application of the decrees from the recently closed Council of Trent in order to reform the clergy, and also—which is what interests us here—to impose rules in the areas of liturgy and worship, which had immediate impact on all forms of art, from architecture to sculpture, painting and stucco, and involving goldsmiths, engravers and others. In the name of decorum as well as of magnificence, the State of Milan underwent a radical renewal of its ecclesiastical buildings. His constant companion in this journey of renewal was the creative Pellegrino Tibaldi, his ‘perito architetto’ (expert architect), the general superintendent of buildings in the archdiocese, who worked for Borromeo from 1561, given that he took on the project of the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia (1564 to 1589; Fig. 10.5),

19 Susanna Zanuso, “Cristoforo Solari tra Milano e Venezia”, *Nuovi Studi*, 8 (2000), pp. 23–24.

20 Agosti, *Bambaia*, pp. 182–183.

21 Yasmine Helfer, “Guglielmo della Porta: dal Duomo di Genova al Duomo di Milano”, *Prospettiva*, 132 (2008), pp. 61–77.



FIGURE 10.5 Pavia, Collegio Borromeo: front porch designed by Pellegrino Tibaldi, 1564.

a blueprint for the new fervour for construction promoted by the Cardinal and created in an austere Michelangelesque style that Tibaldi had developed while in Rome.²² This architect, who guided the workforce with drawings and written instructions, carried out many inspections of other cities in the region (including Alessandria, Lodi, and Tortona) in order to guide the improvement work

²² In summary, on architectural events in Milan in the era of Tibaldi see: Stefano Della Torre, "Milano: le due città", in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il secondo Cinquecento*, Claudia Conforti e Richard J. Tuttle eds., (Milan, 2001), pp. 380–389; T. Barton Thurber, "L'architettura religiosa nell'arcidiocesi di Carlo Borromeo", *ibid.*, 372–389; Scotti, "La 'bella maniera'", pp. 87–93.

needed for the renewal of regional cathedrals; places of worship that were particularly dear to the theorists of the Counter-Reformation. With the intent of extending the devotional network throughout the territories, Carlo Borromeo, aided by his architect, sought to establish places of pilgrimage through the creation of the sanctuaries of Caravaggio, Saronno and Rho which Tibaldi carried out between 1571 and 1586 (the year in which he left for Spain) without seeing the final results, since their construction stretched into the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Carlo Borromeo constantly controlled over even the most distant territories in person, indeed, within the first few years of holding the position of archbishop he undertook the indefatigable task of pastoral visits, fieldwork that preceded the rational collection of regulations listed in his *Instructiones fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae* (1577). In this work, Borromeo radically intervened on every detail of religious buildings: from the initial plan to its architectural elements, from the sculptural and painted decorations to the liturgical furnishings. Pursuing the 'utility and decorum of the church'²³ was relatively straightforward in terms of the new construction sites, however problems did arise with regard to buildings that had been previously erected; the archbishop intervened in drastic terms in these cases. The duties of his office did not even spare family memorials, seeing that, in advocating the destruction of many tombs of noble families that were considered to be too ostentatious due to their decorations born of classical or Mannerist imagination, he had the red marble sarcophagus containing the remains of his ancestor Gian Giacomo Medici removed from beneath the standing figure of the marquis.²⁴

The Cathedral in Milan, a medieval construction site that was constantly open for extensions, became the ideal location in which to observe the interventionist ideas of Carlo Borromeo, who literally dismantled the figurative decorations from the interior in order to eliminate any reference, however, veiled to the secular in order to promote a new form of dignity and functionality of the spaces, beginning with the preeminence of the main altar.²⁵

23 Richard Schofield, "Architettura, dottrina e magnificenza nell'architettura ecclesiastica dell'età di Carlo e Federico Borromeo", in Francesco Repishti, Richard Schofield, *Architettura e controriforma. I dibattiti per la facciata del Duomo di Milano, 1582-1682* (Milan, 2004), pp. 125-249 (cit. from p. 172).

24 Barbara Agosti, "Interpretazioni della scultura rinascimentale lombarda tra Vasari e Cicognara", in *Scultura lombarda del Rinascimento. I monumenti Borromeo*, Mauro Natale, ed. (Turin, 1997), pp. 307-308.

25 For some cases of conservation of pre-existing elements, Stefania Buganza, "San Carlo e l'antico Duomo: il cantiere vetrario", in *Carlo Borromeo, Pellegrino Tibaldi e la trasformazione interna del Duomo di Milano. Nuove acquisizioni critiche e documentarie*,

The completion of these interventions was guaranteed by the impeccable directorship of Tibaldi, to whom the idea of models of simple classicism is due, that were reproduced in different contexts and according to a correct form; and in this sense the redesigned altars in the cathedral, articulated with a simple aedicular structure with minimal decoration, are testament to this.²⁶ At the same time, however, he was involved in the creation of the sculptural decoration, providing drawings for the *protostatuario* (chief sculptor, a position established in 1585) Francesco Brambilla, who was responsible for the preparation of the wax and terracotta models that were transformed into the final works by various sculptors. The models of these two men combined to guide the execution of the marble of the choir enclosure, the inlaid wood of the choir stalls and most of the bronze work of the main altar topped by a spectacular ciborium in the form of a temple, not to mention two monumental pulpits (Fig. 10.6).²⁷ The unification of architectural and sculptural language promoted by the works of Tibaldi and Brambilla within the construction of the Cathedral is a compelling moment in the history of art in Milan and one of great relevance in international terms, to the extent that Pompeo Leoni took on Francesco Brambilla as a collaborator, trying to persuade the Milanese sculptor to follow him to Spain, while Leoni was working on the Escorial.²⁸ The dynamism of the sculptures in the ambulatory executed according to Brambilla's models show why he was soon considered to be the rightful heir to the sculptor Annibale Fontana who died in 1587 (firstly by Giovan Paolo Lomazzo in his *Idea del tempio della pittura* in 1591).²⁹

As it had done at other times in its history, the church of Santa Maria presso San Celso once more found itself in the vanguard, welcoming many masters who otherwise struggled to establish themselves in the more official buildings of Borromeo's Milan such as the Cathedral: Annibale Fontana here competed with Stoldo Lorenzi, a Florentine sculptor who, as the ideal heir to Cellini in

Proceeding of the Symposium (10 June 2010) Giulia Benati e Francesco Repishti, eds., *Nuovi Annali. Rassegna di studi e contributi per il Duomo di Milano*, 11 (2010, but 2011), pp. 155–157.

26 Giulia Benati, "Gli altari pellegrineschi. Proposta di cronologia", in *Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 183–204.

27 Morandotti, *Milano profana*, pp. 237, 247 n. 91 (with earlier literature). On the value of these models and the modality of their translation see Susanna Zanuso, "Da Angelo Marini a Marco Antonio Prestinari", forthcoming.

28 Morandotti, *Milano profana*, pp. 242, 249, n. 156.

29 With regard to the relationship between Fontana and Brambilla, I recall: Morandotti, *Milano profana*, pp. 238–240.



FIGURE 10.6 Southern Pulpit with the Doctors of the Church, 1580–1599, upon a project by Pellegrino Tibaldi and models by Francesco Brambilla. Milan, Duomo.

Florence under Francesco I de' Medici, had taken part in the decoration of the *Studiolo* (1573) immediately prior to his work in Milan (1573–1575). The results of these sculpted enterprises can be seen in part in the tribune of Santa Maria presso San Celso, but most of all on the façade of the church, designed by Galeazzo Alessi as a backdrop animated with niches containing statues.³⁰

Prior to his definitive return to Perugia in 1569, Alessi, on the invitation of the Adda family, one of the noble families most involved in the construction of San Celso, participated in projects aimed at the redefinition of the structure of the Sacro Monte di Varallo, for which the Adda family were, at the time, one of the most active trustees. Alessi envisaged the development of the simple architectural design of small chapels around a central plan, in some cases embellished with pronaos or with defined facades created by a simple aedicular structure: structures that became a much replicated model in its own right, intending to reinterpret an earlier project aimed at recreating through imitation the holy places in Jerusalem.³¹ This new way of thinking, that engendered a sense of literary progression to the stories of the life of Christ told in the internal spaces, was taken on, with the necessary revisions and expediciencies developed by other architects such as Martino Bassi, by Carlo Borromeo and other protagonists of the Counter Reformation such as Carlo Bascapè, bishop of Novara. The theatrical vivacity of the devotional chapel interiors, in which painting and sculpture create a dialogue, based on an idea dating back to Gaudenzio Ferrari, the initial artistic driving force of the Sacro Monte (Fig. 10.7), fed the wonder and religious fervour of the faithful, albeit mediated by the wooden lattices or stained glass windows that separated them from the interiors. Soon, this model of urban and landscape settings began to appear in other areas of Spanish Lombardy, including the Sacro Monte di Orta, dedicated to narrating the life and passion of Saint Francis, which is of particular importance for its artistic endeavour.³² Visiting these places, now as then, it is difficult to choose between the exceptional quality of the artistic inventions and the natural beauty of the location (Fig. 10.8), in which “it seems one is entering an exceedingly pleasant garden”.³³

30 Scotti Tosini, “La ‘bella maniera’”, p. 82.

31 Thurber, “L’architettura” pp. 398–401; Scotti, “La ‘bella maniera’”, p. 82.

32 For essential bibliographical references: Elena De Filippis, *Guida del Sacro Monte di Varallo*, with essays by Guido Gentile e Pier Giorgio Longo (Borgosesia, 2009); Elena De Filippis, Fiorella Mattioli Carcano, *Guida al Sacro Monte d’Orta* (Omegna, 2001).

33 Morandotti, *Milano profana* pp. 100–105; the citation, relating to the Sacro Monte di Varallo, is by Paolo Morigia, *Historia dell’antichità di Milano* (Venice, 1592), p. 391.



FIGURE 10.7 *Gaudenzio Ferrari, Crucifixion (detail), c. 1518–1520. Varallo, Sacro Monte, chapel of the Crucifixion.*

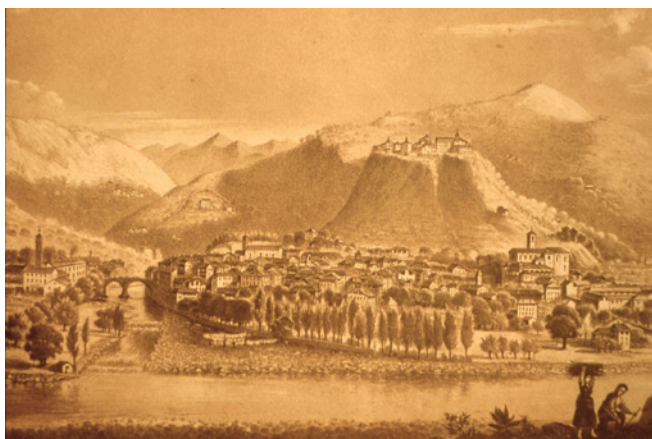


FIGURE 10.8 *The Sacro Monte di Varallo and the Valsesia towards the Monte Rosa in a nineteenth-century engraving.*

1585–1595: The Milan of Pirro I Visconti Borromeo and Giovan Paolo Lomazzo

The wonders of nature and artifice of the Sacri Monti in Lombardy and Piedmont found an entirely secular application in a villa just a few kilometres outside Milan, in the village of Lainate where, in April 1589 the spectacular nymphaeum desired by Pirro I Visconti Borromeo was inaugurated.³⁴ This nymphaeum was a monumental building for *giochi d'acqua* (Fig. 10.9), rich in sculptural furnishings and collections of art (for the most part dispersed) displayed in rooms with white and black mosaic tiles or painted (fig. 10.10) and set where calcareous accretions excavated from natural caves (probably in Lombardy) were pieced together as art and embellished with shells and hard stones (Fig. 10.11).

That fundamental stage of late-Mannerism in northern Italy, that was for a long time unknown, restores a uniquely Lombard declination in the fashion for grottoes and nymphaeums in Europe in the late sixteenth century. Pirro Visconti, who knew of many of the analogous installations in Florence, Mantua, or Genoa, wanted to use only local manpower. This was anything but



FIGURE 10.9 *Lainate (Milan), Villa Visconti Borromeo: the nymphaeum built to a project by Martino Bassi, 1585–1589.*

34 In this paragraph I quote from Morandotti, *Milano profana*.



FIGURE 10.10 *Lainate (Milan), Villa Visconti Borromeo: a hall of the nymphaeum covered with a mosaic of coloured and painted pebbles, executed upon cartoons by Camillo Procaccini, 1587–1589.*

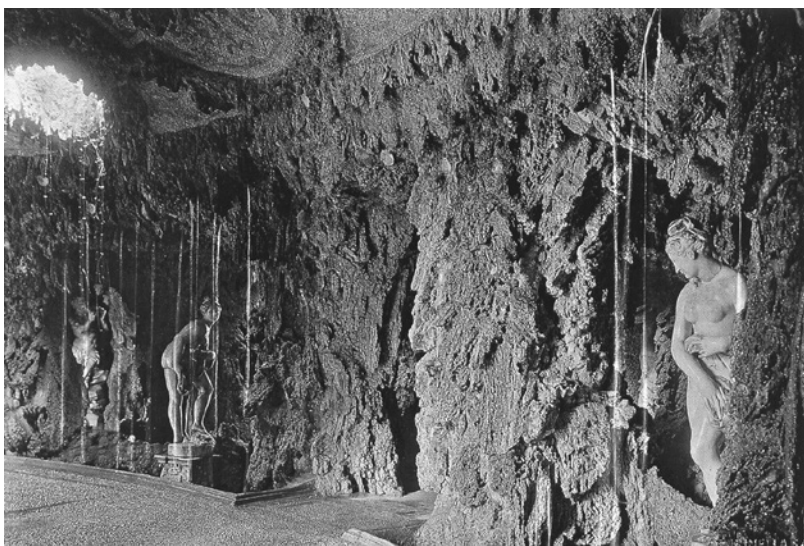


FIGURE 10.11 *Lainate (Milan), Villa Visconti Borromeo: the great grotto of the nymphaeum with operating giochi d'acqua in a 1935 photograph; the marble nymphs were executed by Giulio Cesare Procaccini and Marco Antonio Prestinari upon models by Francesco Brambilla, 1588–1589.*

a provincial choice, as it gave life to a programmatic promotion of the Milanese artistic milieu. This is of great significance, particularly in the light of the strategy of a character to whom Pirro Visconti Borromeo was tightly connected: Giovan Paolo Lomazzo, who dedicated his rich, erudite, and variety scholarly and literary output to the search for the roots of art, particularly Lombard art. The few artists who were not Lombard in Lainate ended up becoming Lombard, attracted to the seductive atmosphere of the waters. This was the case for Camillo Procaccini, a native of Bologna but Milanese by adoption, who Visconti Borromeo himself invited from Bologna in 1587 as he could provide him and Lomazzo with the latest developments in the art of Correggio, an artist of fundamental importance for the construction of Lainate, and for Milanese and Lombard art in the period between the late 1500s and the Neoclassical era.

On the walls but especially on the ceilings adorned with mosaic tiles of the nymphaeum, in the grotesque designs from the capricious imagination of Camillo Procaccini, the decorative repertoire of all of Milan's artistic industries shines through (Figs. 10.12–10.13). In terms of crystal work, decorative armour, fabrics, and goldsmiths' art produced in Milan in the second half of the sixteenth century and held in high esteem throughout the European courts, the traditions had developed an analogous taste for legendary creatures and classically decorative ornamentation. The number of artists active in the field of producing luxury goods with unbridled imagination and invention are too numerous to list but are celebrated in the pages of the *Nobiltà di Milano* by Paolo Morigia (1595) and are the subject of a great deal of research.³⁵

In that natural *Wunderkammer* Pirro Visconti exposed true masterpieces to the vagaries of the *giochi d'acqua*: genuine works of Correggio were on display (the *Agony in the Garden* now in the Wellington Museum, London) or presumed works by this artist (the *Contest of Apollo and Marsyas* in the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, reattributed to Bronzino at the beginning of the twentieth century), as well as paintings by Bernardino Luini (the *Salvator Mundi* in the Musée Condé, Chantilly) and Camillo Boccaccino (*Venus and Amor* in the Hermitage). In the rooms of the building, casts of sculptures by Michelangelo could be admired, perhaps as well as small-scale works by Giambologna, whose style is evoked in some extraordinary works of Milanese

35 A balanced summary of studies in Silvio Leydi, “‘Al fi, chi vol de tut cora a Milan’. Arti suntuarie milanesi del Cinquecento, in *Arcimboldo. Artista milanese tra Leonardo e Caravaggio*, exhibition catalogue (Milan, 2011) Silvia Ferino-Pagden, ed., pp. 51–63; see also: Paola Venturelli, “Milano e l’arte della glittica”, in *Lombardia manierista* (cit. above, n. 7), pp. 213–227.



FIGURE 10.12 *Camillo Procaccini, Grotesques, 1587–1589. Lainate, Villa Visconti Borromeo.*



FIGURE 10.13 *Workshop of Girolamo Miseroni, Crystal Vase Carved with Grotesque Motifs, c. 1590–1600. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Kunstkammer.*

sculpture, almost unrecognizable in this secular version of their style. Pirro Visconti called Francesco Brambilla, the *protostatuario* of Milan Cathedral, to coordinate the numerous sculptures in marble, stucco and bronze surrounding the 'Fountain'. It was in Lainate, under the supervision of this great originator of artistic designs, that Giulio Cesare Procaccini and Marco Antonio Prestinari made their début, authors of some marble nymphs placed between the basins

of the grottoes (Fig. 10.11)—two artists soon hired by the Milanese *fabbrica* and on other projects close to Archbishop Federico Borromeo's heart. Brambilla also designed the *Venus* in the National Gallery of Art (Mellon Collection) in Washington, together with its companion statue, *Bacchus*, only recently recognized as works that originated in the extraordinary nymphaeum at Lainate;³⁶ the Mellon sculptures, among the most famous bronzes of the Renaissance, were long believed to be by Sansovino, but are in fact by two anonymous Lombard artists under Brambilla's supervision.

1595–1631: The Milan of Federico Borromeo

The nomination of Federico Borromeo, who was Archbishop of Milan from 1595 up until the year of his death, should be seen as a form of ideal continuity from the 'reign' of his cousin Carlo. Educated between the Bologna of Cardinal Paleotti and the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia, from which he graduated in theology in 1585, Federico moved to Rome in 1586, where, living on the margins of the papal court, he frequented many artists and developed his studies on Early Christian antiquities while at the same time approaching the rigorous spirituality of Father Filippo Neri.³⁷ After a brief sojourn in Milan from June 1595 to April 1597, which was useful for planning the arrival in his city of the only work that linked Caravaggio and his homeland (the *Basket of Fruit* in the Ambrosiana),³⁸ he moved permanently to the capital of the Duchy from 1601. With great skill, he involved nobles and intellectuals in all his artistic projects, beginning with those most dear to him: the decorations for the beatification 1602 and canonization of Saint Carlo Borromeo (1610), as well as the establishment of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana and the Accademia Ambrosiana (1620). Federico relied on the collaboration of significant lay and ecclesiastical individuals,³⁹ however his strength lay in his experiences in Rome that had guaranteed him enduring relations with the world of scholars

36 Giancarlo Gentilini, Alessandro Morandotti, "The Sculptures of the Nymphaeum at Lainate: the Origins of the Mellon *Venus* and *Bacchus*", *Studies in the History of Art*, 24 (1990), pp. 135–171.

37 Barbara Agosti, *Collezionismo e archeologia cristiana nel Seicento. Federico Borromeo e il Medioevo artistico tra Roma e Milano* (Milan, 1996).

38 Alessandro Morandotti, *Caravaggio e Milano. La Canestra dell'Ambrosiana* (Milan, 2012).

39 The case of the brothers Guido and Giovanni Ambrogio and Alessandro Mazenta is emblematic and has been thoroughly studied; for a summary, see Valentina Milano, "I fratelli Mazenta negli episcopati di Gasparo Visconti e Federico Borromeo", *Arte Lombarda*, 131 (2001/1), pp. 67–72.

in antiquities and of artists. The Archbishop's Roman cultural inheritance can be seen not only in his collection, where we find landscapes and still lifes by the Rome-based Flemings Jan Brueghel and Paul Bril,⁴⁰ but at the same time his recourse to Cesare Nebbia and to Federico Zuccari for the early artistic initiatives promoted by Federico in around 1602–1604: the decoration of the great hall of the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia, culminating in the large fresco on the northern wall of the room by Zuccari depicting Carlo Borromeo's nomination to Cardinal by the family pope Pius IV: a clear testament to the penetration of elevated narrative models that had been perfected in the realms of Tuscan-Roman late Mannerism.⁴¹

Federico, however, knew how to take counsel and learn from unconventional masters, as we are reminded by the role of mentor taken on by Pirro Visconti Borromeo⁴²—an individual described as “elegantis iudicii vir” in the inaugural oration of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana read by the archbishop. Federico went on to translate the lessons of the nymphaeum and his collections into a more normative context, set within the parameters of decorum and a more measured Classicism.

An example of continuity of this earlier tradition, seen, however, from the perspective of a necessary return to order, can be found in the experiences of Marco Antonio Prestinari. Prestinari was considered as the most able sculptor in Milan in the early decades of the seventeenth century and was welcomed into the family circle of Cardinal Borromeo⁴³ shortly after having completed his *Adonis* for the garden at Lainate (completed before 1602, now in the Louvre, Paris), a late Mannerist masterpiece of a clear and provocatively secular nature.

In the era of Federico, as a natural consequence of the architectural renewal of sacred buildings within the city carried out under the governance of his cousin Carlo, a tightly controlled decorative campaign existed, which rendered Milanese artistic endeavours in the first thirty years of the seventeenth century “in a certain sense unique in Europe”.⁴⁴ The sites on which the new generation of artists, sculptors, and stucco decorators worked were: the Certosa di Garegnano, Santa Maria della Passione, Sant'Angelo, Sant'Antonio Abate, San

40 Stefania Bedoni, *Jan Brueghel in Italia e il collezionismo del Seicento* (Florence-Milan, 1983).

41 Giulio Bora, “La pittura del Seicento nelle province occidentali lombarde”, in *La pittura in Italia. Il Seicento*, a cura di Mina Gregori ed Erich Schleier (Milan, 1988), I, p. 77.

42 Morandotti, *Milano profana*, pp. 71–74.

43 Susanna Zanuso, “Marco Antonio Prestinari scultore di Federico Borromeo”, *Nuovi Studi*, 5 (1998), pp. 85–109.

44 Bora, “La pittura del Seicento”, p. 77.

Vittore al Corpo, San Raffaele, and Sant'Alessandro.⁴⁵ In the meantime, many of the novelties and innovations had an impact on projects that had been ongoing throughout the sixteenth century such as Milan Cathedral, the Certosa di Pavia, or Santa Maria presso San Celso. It was precisely in this church that Giulio Cesare Procaccini⁴⁶ began his career as a painter in the first decade of the 1600s; in terms of delicacy and sensuality, he competed with the established artist Cerano who had been linked to the Borromeo family throughout his career from the very beginning in the late sixteenth century.⁴⁷ The stucco work, frescoes, and altarpieces created out of the creativity of these two exceptional talents led to the birth of Lombard Baroque to take place within the arch span of Santa Maria presso San Celso, borne out of an idea of continuity from the late Mannerist age. By considering the works of Giulio Cesare for this church, which was so dear to the Milanese aristocracy, we are able to understand the breadth of the panorama of choices made by these Milanese artists. His *Pietà* of 1604, which is of a devotional intensity of a truly Counter-Reformation nature, brings together the influences of Barocci and Federico Zuccari but also shows the legacy of Correggio (from whom descends the unforgettable figure of Saint John the Baptist on the left), whereas his *Martyrdom of Saints Nazarius and Celsus* of 1606 transcribes the dramatic talents of Cerano, shown in his *Martyrdom of Saint Catherine* exhibited next to it, in a more classical and delicate way; finally his *Martyrdom of Saint Stephen* (now in the Brera Gallery), of an unknown date but certainly some years before 1610, shows the exuberant Procaccini—in his chromatic choices, plastic strength of the figures and grandeur of composition—to have been one of the very few artists in Northern Italy able to offer an experienced response to Rubens on his journey from Mantua to Genoa.

This vibrant climate at the beginning of the seventeenth century brought about some crucial initiatives. The decorative *imprese* organized for the celebration of the beatification and canonization of Carlo Borromeo which included the famous series of *quadroni* dedicated to the life (1602–1603) and miracles of the new saint (1610) displayed to this day during the liturgical celebrations of his feast day in the Cathedral between the supporting pillars of

45 Marco Rosci, "L'età di Federico Borromeo", in *Pittura a Milano dal Seicento al Neoclassicismo* (I centri della pittura lombarda) M. Gregori, ed., XIV (Milan, 1999), p. 3.

46 The pictorial undertakings of the artist in this building are well documented in Marco Rosci, pp. 16–17, 56, 58. 62. On the stucco work see also: Morandotti, *Milano profana*, pp. 239–240.

47 Marco Rosci, *Il Cerano. L'opera completa*, Milano 2000; *Il Cerano (1573–1632). Protagonista del Seicento lombardo*, exhibition catalogue (Milan, 2005) Marco Rosci, ed.

the central nave. This cycle of large canvases painted with uninhibited creative freedom and great narrative talent sanctioned predominantly the success of one form of decorative typology (that of large canvases) that was to become an integral part of the building in sacred architecture in Lombardy in the seventeenth century. At the same time, this cycle inaugurated the iconographic fortune of a saint that was almost without peers in Europe at that time. For this reason, Milan, its archbishops, its noble classes from which the Borromeo family hailed, had never been as visible as in that particular moment. Significant resonances were felt in Rome, where the façade of Saint Peter housed an ephemeral structure in which images of fourteenth century canonized archbishops of the city were displayed, culminating in a marvellous image of Saint Ambrose painted by Cerano (now in the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana).

One work above all others summarizes the vivacity and the role played by the Lombard school of art in Italy in the seventeenth century, the so-called “three-hand painting” in the Pinacoteca di Brera, created in about 1620 by Cerano, Procaccini and Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli, known as *il Morazzone*.⁴⁸ Conceived as a sort of academic challenge between the three leading artists in Milan in the early seventeenth century, this painting is a veritable litmus test for identifying the subtle distinctions that reveal the individual choices within a figurative language common to this artistic school. The work (Fig. 10.14) shows the martyrdom of two young sisters (Seconda and Rufina) who lived at the time of Imperial Rome’s conversion to Christianity. Close analysis reveals the varying tonalities of the different ‘voices’ with which each artist expresses himself through his art. Morazzone, responsible for the agile figure of the executioner in the centre of the work, ensures the dynamism of the composition. With his macabre and visionary talent, Cerano, undertook the most ferocious part of the painting, violently articulating the efforts of a *putto* intent on holding back a dog attracted to the copious amounts of blood seeping from the body of the decapitated martyr. Procaccini, lastly, with persuasive delicacy unique to him, records Saint Rufina in ecstatic abandon who, certain of her heavenly reward as a result of her sacrifice, offers her lily-white neck to the wicked executioner, indifferent to the warnings of imminent danger that a Rubens-esque *putto* seems to be shyly offering her. It becomes clear that the first owner of the painting, the Milanese noble Scipione Toso, and the probable inspirer of this artistic dispute, the art expert Girolamo Borsieri from Como, had assigned to each of the artists involved in this ‘showcase’ work of art, the parts of the composition that most closely reflected their respective artistic preferences. At that time Borsieri, who was in contact with men of letters such

48 Jacopo Stoppa, *Il Morazzone* (Milan, 2000), pp. 242–243.



FIGURE 10.14 *Giovan Battista Crespi, il Cerano, Pier Francesco Mazzuchelli, il Morazzone and Giulio Cesare Procaccini, Martyrdom of Saints Rufina and Seconda, c. 1620–1625. Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera.*

as Giovan Battista Marino and top-level collectors from around northern Italy, such as Giovan Carlo Doria, a gentleman from Genoa and the Duke of Savoy, extolled the virtues of these new Lombard artists and of the local collectors such as Toso who bought their work in his literary works, both in his *Guide to Milan* from 1619 and in his extraordinary epistolary kept in the Biblioteca Civica in Como, comprising letters written between 1606 and 1626.⁴⁹ Perhaps

49 Luciano Caramel, "Arte e artisti nell'epistolario di Girolamo Borsieri", in *Contributi dell'istituto di storia dell'arte medievale e moderna dell'Università Cattolica*, 1 (Milan, 1966), pp. 91–235.

that extraordinary militant critic imagined in this way he could manage to include Milanese artists into the canon of regional schools that was beginning to be defined.⁵⁰

As we have already mentioned, many public initiatives aimed at creating consensus were linked to the name of Federico Borromeo, a veritable 'duke' of the period. These initiatives included the Ambrosiana, with its library and collections of paintings, drawings, and sculptures for use by the Accademia Artistica, such stronghold became pivotal to the new civic identity of Milan, identifiable at the time as the city of the archbishop. Armed with his experiences of the Accademia San Luca in Rome and the Accademia dei Carracci in Bologna, Federico Borromeo, whose Ambrosiana opened in 1620, imposed a normative shift in artistic production, moving ever further from the dramatic tension and fervent tones of the *quadroni* in the cathedral or the scenes modelled or painted in the chapels dedicated to retracing the Passion of Christ in the Sacro Monte in Varallo, a construction site that was always open to artistic innovation. It was here in Varallo in the 1620s that Morazzone found himself in dialogue with the sculptor Giovanni d'Enrico prior to the return to Varallo of Giovanni's brother, Tanzio da Varallo (from around 1616) from a long sojourn in Rome and Naples over which he developed under the influence of Caravaggio's style. The d'Enrico brothers worked side by side on a series of chapels that are spectacular for their visionary tones and their formal and expressive exhilaration.⁵¹ After a short period things changed and it was predominantly Daniele Crespi's (recorded as a pupil at the Accademia Ambrosiana in 1621) turn to interpret the new artistic climate that favoured more measured passion and narrative emphasis in the name of technical diligence and accuracy of design. Through his ability to revisit local traditions in the light of his personal readings of classicism from Emilia and his understanding of the masters of the sixteenth century, Crespi created altarpieces and cycles of frescoes of an eloquently expressive register that was extremely controlled.⁵² His masterpiece, which was destined to have a school formed around it, is the cycle of frescoes in the Certosa di Garegnano (1628–1629); their narrative fluidity leads to the familiarly baroque style in the work of the Nuvolone brothers and the sculptor Dionigi Bussola, whose unforgettable population of statues live in the

50 Mina Gregori, "Note storiche sulla Lombardia tra Cinque e Seicento", in *Il Seicento lombardo. Saggi introduttivi*, exhibition catalogue (Milan, 1973), p. 42.

51 Francesco Frangi, "Itinerario di Tanzio da Varallo", in *Percorsi caravaggeschi tra Roma e Piemonte*, Giovanni Romano ed., (Turin, 1999), pp. 113–160.

52 Bora, "La pittura del Seicento", pp. 86–89; Francesco Frangi, "Milano circa 1620: l'Accademia di Federico Borromeo e gli esordi di Daniele Crespi", *Nuovi Studi*, 1 (1996), pp. 125–129; Id., *Daniele Crespi. La giovinezza ritrovata* (Milan, 2013).

twentieth chapel of the Sacro Monte d'Orta, together with the 'Canonization of Saint Francis' (circa 1675–1678).⁵³

1635–1707: From Archbishop Cesare Monti to the Marquis Cesare Pagani

"The contribution of Lombardy to the history of the Baroque consists to a considerable extent in the constant stream of stonemasons, sculptors and architects to Rome. In Milan itself seventeenth- as well as eighteenth-century sculpture is disappointing". With these concise words written in a volume providing a broad summary of seventeenth century and early eighteenth century art in Italy that is still widely consulted today, Rudolf Wittkower concludes the chapter on the Lombards with scarcely a nod to their talent.⁵⁴ It is indeed true that over the course of the seventeenth century many architects, stone workers, and stucco workers left Lombardy for Rome, often for good, but they also went to Venice, the Republic of Genoa, Savoyard Piedmont, and the transalpine countries. However it is a delay in terms of research and the consequent lack of acknowledgment of the specific quality of the Lombard school (in any area of artistic production), that have long encumbered the misfortune of the masters active in the State of Milan at that time. With regard to stucco art, the studies initiated by the crucial volume edited by Edoardo Arslan in 1964 have made constant progress,⁵⁵ and many new discoveries concerning the production of sculptures in the seventeenth century have emerged from current research on key construction sites such as the cathedral in Milan and the Certosa di Pavia,⁵⁶ which attracted the best local artists.

The Spanish governors of the time principally invested in military architecture; engineers and mathematical minds constituted a necessary resource that

53 Mina Gregori, "I ricordi figurativi di Alessandro Manzoni", *Paragone* 9 (1950), pp. 17–18.

54 Rudolf Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy: 1600 to 1750* (The Pelican History of Art), xvi (1958), p. 87 (from the revised 1973 edition).

55 *Arte e Artisti dei laghi lombardi, II. Gli stuccatori dal barocco al rococò*, Edoardo Arslan ed., (Como, 1964). Following this see in the first instance: Simonetta Coppa, "Il Seicento in Valtellina. Pittura e decorazione in stucco", in *Arte Lombarda*, 88–89 (1989), pp. 5–137; Silvia A. Colombo, Simonetta Coppa, *I Carloni di Scaria* (Artisti dei laghi. Itinerari europei), 2 (Lugano, 1997); Federica Bianchi, Edoardo Agustoni, *I Casella di Carona* (Artisti dei laghi. Itinerari europei), 6 (Lugano, 2002).

56 For the late Mannerist and Baroque periods, see the numerous contributions by Susanna Zanuso in the jumbled *Certosa di Pavia*, Franco Maria Ricci ed., (Parma, 2006).

was constantly approached by civic purchasers.⁵⁷ Celebrations and ephemeral structures, in continuity with the sixteenth century, characterized public life according to a well-defined ceremony: on these occasions, the Spanish, the local, and the religious authorities filled the spaces of the city asserting their hierarchical order and prerogatives. The Milanese publishing and printmaking industry, both flourishing arts in the seventeenth century, provide abundant evidence of this.⁵⁸

Artists of various provenance and of various levels of professionalism worked on these temporary productions, including well-known artists. Francesco Maria Ricchino, “the most imaginative and most richly endowed architect of the early seventeenth century”,⁵⁹ was often active in the design of these productions.⁶⁰ Following a sojourn in Rome to keep up with the artistic developments in the capital of the Papacy, Ricchino was very active from the very beginning for Federico Borromeo, who appreciated his talent and virtuosity. Later, in dialogue with Carlo Maderno and ahead of Borromini and Bernini for his spectacular planimetric solutions for the interiors adopted for some Milanese churches,⁶¹ Ricchino became the leading professional of the noble classes. He was responsible for the Palazzo Durini and the Palazzo Annoni in Milan,⁶² of strictly classical structure, but also for some useful suggestions for transforming the harsh rocky surface of the Isola Bella into a garden of delights animated with *giochi d'acqua* and buildings looking out into nature (Fig. 10.15). The suggestions proposed by Ricchino for the heirs of cardinal Federico, the Arona line of the Borromeo family, were planned between 1649 and 1650, the years in which the construction site of the Isola Bella began to take shape under the stimulus of Vitaliano VI, in constant dialogue with his brother Giberto III, lodged in Rome.⁶³ For the most part, Ricchino's project remained on paper and the plan was completely revised in favour of the wholly baroque grandeur

57 Aurora Scotti Tosini, “Lo Stato di Milano”, in *Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il Seicento*, Aurora Scotti Tosini ed., (Milan, 2003), II, pp. 424–430.

58 Giulio Bora, “Arte, apparati, emblemi a Milano al tempo di Cesare Monti”, in *Le stanze del cardinale Monti, 1635–1650. La collezione ricomposta*, exhibition catalogue (Milan, 1994), pp. 39–54.

59 Wittkower, *Art and architecture*, p. 76.

60 Scotti, “Lo Stato di Milano”, pp. 448–449.

61 Ibid., p. 443.

62 Ibid., pp. 450–451.

63 Alessandro Morandotti, “La formazione della Galleria e la sua storia tra la seconda metà del Seicento e la fine del Settecento”, in *Collezione Borromeo. La Galleria dei Quadri dell'Isola Bella*, Alessandro Morandotti and Mauro Natale eds., (Cinisello Balsamo, 2011), pp. 9–45.

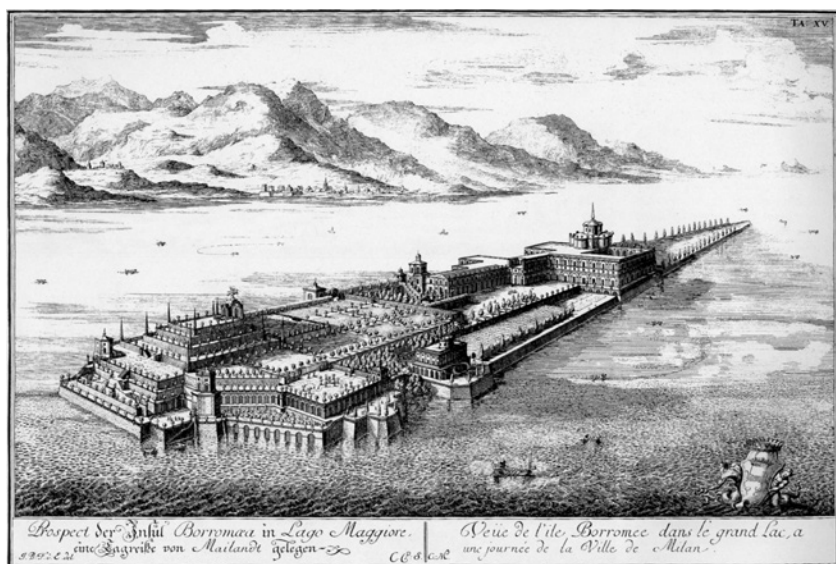


FIGURE 10.15 *Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, View of Isola Bella, 1721. Isola Bella, Palazzo Borromeo.*

achieved by the interventions of Francesco Castelli (active on Isola Bella from 1659 to 1671) and Andrea Biffi (who took over from Castelli and was the driving force of the site until his death in 1686).⁶⁴ The role Carlo Fontana played in the revision of the project for Isola Bella remains difficult to evaluate. Fontana came to Milan from Rome in 1688 on the invitation of the Borromeo family⁶⁵ and offered to give solemnity, truly on a territory-wide scale, to the colossal statue of Saint Carlo Borromeo,⁶⁶ which started to be molded in bronze between 1693 and 1694 by Siro Zanelli and Bernardo Falconi, who interpreted a much earlier idea of Cerano. The family saint was located so as to watch over and protect the fiefs belonging to the Borromeo family on Lake Maggiore from the height of the Sacro Monte di Arona.

On Isola Bella, on the other hand, the sober exterior of the great house hides internal forms created according to the decorative emphasis of the baroque and based on a series of *coup de théâtre* able to arouse continuous wonder (Fig. 10.16). The series of rooms of this palazzo rise to become a veritable atlas of Lombard baroque civilization, as we only began to understand recently, in

64 Ibid., pp. 9–12.

65 Ibid., pp. 10–11, 16–17.

66 Aurora Scotti, "Introduzione", in *Storia dell'architettura*, p. 15.



FIGURE 10.16 *Isola Bella, Palazzo Borromeo: the Sala del Trono, with the wooden telamones by Siro Zanelli and the stuccoes by Antonio Roncati, 1685–1690.*

all forms of artistic production: from paintings to cabinet making, woodcuts and stucco.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Mauro Natale, *Le Isole Borromeo e la Rocca di Angera. Guida storico-artistica* (Cinisello Balsamo, 2000); Morandotti, "La formazione della Galleria"; Patrizia Zambrano, "Una nota preliminare per le cornici della Galleria dei Quadri del Palazzo Borromeo dell'Isola Bella", in *Collezione Borromeo*, pp. 380–385; Marina Dell'Omo, "Maestranze ticinesi tra Verbano e Ossola: Antonio Roncati e Francesco Antonio Giorgioli", *Antiquarium Medionovarese*, III (2009), pp. 397–412.

Researchers have opened many new doors concerning the history of patronage and collecting in seventeenth century Lombardy in recent decades.⁶⁸ The archbishop Cesare Monti,⁶⁹ Bartolomeo Arese,⁷⁰ the Durini family of Monza,⁷¹ the Angera branch of the Borromeo family,⁷² the Trivulzio,⁷³ the Omodei,⁷⁴ the Odescalchi,⁷⁵ the Parravicini,⁷⁶ recently started to reveal their artistic preferences. These prominent figures, who looked toward Rome but also toward other Italian centres of art, portrayed the restless creativity of the civilization of Lombardy whilst contributed to facilitating exchanges of information between local masters and artists outside Lombardy, or, in other cases, making Milan an obligatory stage in the Grand Tour of Italy undertaken by gentlemen from all over Europe. This is the case for the Museo Scientifico assembled by Manfredo Settala; such Wunderkammer became a veritable place of pilgrimage throughout the second half of the seventeenth century. The interior (Fig. 10.17), crammed with artistic and natural curiosities or ethnographic rarities, but also with scientific and mathematical instruments, goes a long way to restore the idea that Milan was not only the city of Saint Carlo Borromeo, but also a place of experimental activity in many areas of human knowledge.⁷⁷

68 On the value of these studies in terms of historical and artistic knowledge see: Alessandro Morandotti, *Il collezionismo in Lombardia. Studi e ricerche tra '600 e '800* (Milan 2008). See also many sections of *Il ritratto in Lombardia da Moroni a Ceruti*, exhibition catalogue, Francesco Frangi and Alessandro Morandotti eds. (Milan, 2002).

69 *Le stanze del cardinale Monti*.

70 Francesco Frangi, "Testimonianze della pittura barocca", in *Pittura in Brianza e in Valsassina dall'Alto Medioevo al Neoclassicismo* (I centri della pittura lombarda), Mina Gregori, ed., VIII (Cinisello Balsamo, 1993), pp. 51–56; *Il Palazzo Arese Borromeo a Cesano Maderno*, Maria Luisa Gatti Perer ed., (Milan, 1999).

71 Cristina Geddo, "Collezionisti e mecenati a Milano tra Sei e Settecento: i Durini conti di Monza", *Artes*, 9 (2001, but 2003), pp. 41–124.

72 Anna Elena Galli, Sergio Monferrini, *I Borromeo d'Angera. Collezionisti e mecenati nella Milano del Seicento* (Milan, 2012).

73 Alessandra Squizzato, *I Trivulzio e le arti. Vicende seicentesche* (Milan, 2013).

74 Andrea Spiriti, "La cultura del Bernini a Milano: Santa Maria della Vittoria (1655–1685)", *Arte Lombarda*, 108–109, (1994/1–2), pp. 108–114; Id., "Luigi Alessandro Omodei e la riqualificazione di S. Carlo al Corso", *Storia dell'Arte*, 84 (1995), pp. 269–282.

75 Sandra Costa, *Dans l'intimité d'un collectionneur. Livio Odescalchi et le faste baroque* (Paris, 2009); *Gli Odescalchi a Como e Innocenzo XI. Committenti, artisti, cantieri* (Como, 2012).

76 Simonetta Coppa, "La Villa Visconti d'Aragona, dimora barocca di un banchiere collezionista", in *Affreschi a Sesto San Giovanni. Cicli decorativi nelle ville del territorio* (Cinisello Balsamo, 1988), pp. 117–185.

77 Morandotti, *Milano profana*, pp. 75–76.

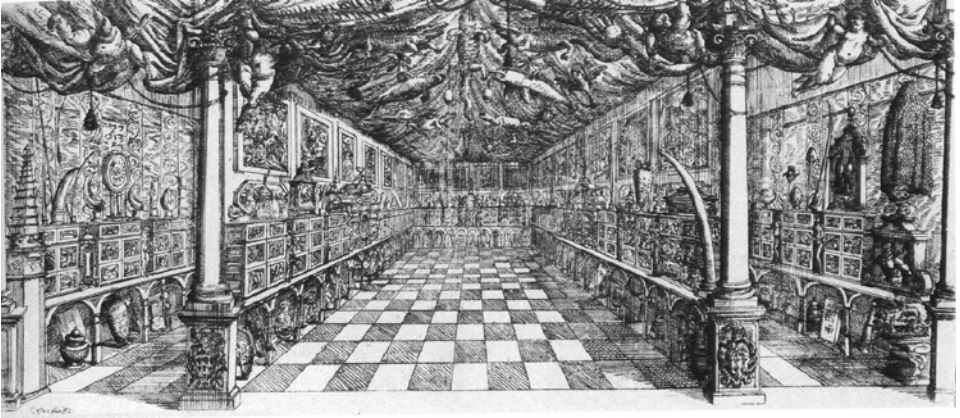


FIGURE 10.17 *Manfredo Settala's Museum in an engraving by Cesare Fiori (from P.F. Scarabelli, Museo o Galeria [...] del Sig. Canonico Manfredo Settala, Tortona, 1666).*

In a different chronological and cultural context, another crucial figure has emerged, Cesare Pagani who was the driving force behind many artistic creations at the eve of the eighteenth century, between the Spanish era and the Austrian era, and I would like to conclude my overview of the arts in Lombardy with a discussion on Pagani.

The marquis Cesare Pagani (d. 1707) was a collector of contemporary artists' works even before becoming a collector of the 'Old Masters'⁷⁸ and he has been recognized as the most fervent promoter, both in public and in private, of the activity of the Venetian artist Sebastian Ricci during Ricci's sojourn in Milan (1694–1696).⁷⁹ Pagani is also acknowledged as having the merit of constantly commissioning two of the most interesting Lombard artists of his time: Stefano Maria Legnani, known as Legnanino, and Paolo Pagani. Paolo Pagani was indeed a constant companion to the marquis in his most inventive initiatives in the field of the arts. The marquis Pagani's role as a diplomat linked to the courts of Vienna, Parma, and Madrid guaranteed him the success of his

78 The inventory of his collection in the opening essay by Daniele Pescarmona, "On the activity of Paolo Pagani and his relationship with the homonymous marquis Cesare", *Arte Lombarda*, 98–99 (1991/3–4), pp. 118–126.

79 On the numerous contributions by the present author and Cristina Geddo, a summary can be found in Alessandro Morandotti, "Sebastiano Ricci a Milano (1694–1696) e la pittura lombarda", in *Sebastiano Ricci (1659–1734)*, International Symposium Papers (Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 14–15 December 2009), Giuseppe Pavanello ed., (Verona, 2012), pp. 209–228.



FIGURE 10.18 *Chiusa d'Isarco (Bolzano), convent church of the Capuchins: the wooden ancona with the altarpiece by Paolo Pagani, Madonna and Child, angels and the Blessed Felice da Cantalice, 1701–1702.*

artists even outside Lombardy: Paolo Pagani was engaged in Vienna and in Moravia,⁸⁰ but later, together with Legnanino, he worked on the project that was dear to the queen of Spain, Maria Anna of Neuburgh at Chiusa d'Isarco, near Bolzano (Fig. 10.18), the birth place of Gabriel Pontifeser, head chaplain

80 Alessandro Morandotti, *Paolo Pagani e i Pagani di Castello Valsolda*, with a contribution by Susanna Zanuso (Lugano, 2000), pp. 98–113.

in Madrid. Whilst the Spanish royals sent to that small village enclosed in the gauge of the valley of the Isarco river some canvases by the court artist Luca Giordano, Cesare Pagani guaranteed the information from Milan.⁸¹

It was a very happy moment for that enduring Duchy, open to artistic interaction with Genoa and Venice, and Milanese artists acknowledged this by renewing the local language. The palazzo of marquis Pagani, in which next to works by Legnanino, Ricci, and Pagani, works by the Genovese artists Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, Domenico Piola, and Alessandro Magnasco were also present, became the location that was emblematic of this new phase in the history of Lombard art, with repercussions that are useful for understanding some of the events of the new century.

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81 Alessandro Morandotti, "Il cantiere di Chiusa Val d'Isarco: Luca Giordano e i pittori lombardi, i reali di Spagna e il marchese Cesare Pagani", in *Bolzano nel Seicento. Itinerario di pittura*, exhibition catalogue, Silvia Spada Pintarelli ed., (Milan, 1994), pp. 97–110.

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Court and Church Music in 14th- and 15th-Century Milan

Giuliano Di Bacco

A concise overview of the role of music in the period must inevitably focus on the major phenomena and protagonists, those that brought substantial innovations in musical techniques, forms, and repertory, as well as in their relationship to contemporary society. Many general histories discuss the fifteenth century as a period in which ideal conditions brought about a radical increase in such musical activities, in Milan first of all: the synergy between the church and the court in the creation of the Duomo's musical chapel would lead to the splendid flourishing of the ducal chapel founded by Galeazzo Maria Sforza. Yet this overview seeks to explore in some detail the preceding century as well, during which current musical historiography assigns a significant role to the musical patronage of the Visconti in Milan and Pavia.

Nonetheless, no close examination of Milanese music history, no matter how concise, can neglect to discuss the centrality, from the High Middle Ages on, of the repertory of liturgical monophonic chant specific to the diocese of Milan. Known as Ambrosian chant, this repertory is the oldest of the local traditions of Christian chant to have survived the development of the official liturgy and “Gregorian” chant of the Roman Catholic Church. Until the standardization of the liturgy by the Franks and the Papacy in the eleventh century and its establishment via the introduction of increasingly precise musical notation, music adorned the church rites in different ways from region to region. Innovations and reciprocal influences were due either to political, socio-economic or cultural circumstances. For instance, during the struggle against the Empress Justina and the Arian heresy, bishop Ambrose made a poet and musician of himself in order to lead his flock through song, and as such, he introduced to Milan (perhaps to the West in general) the practice of singing hymns—compositions on original texts that the faithful would intone in alternation with an organized group of singers, the *schola cantorum*. The allure of such a practice is exemplified in Augustine's impassioned (and tearful) response to these newly composed chants, and the great success of this among other peculiarities, coupled with the growing importance of the city of Milan, brought about the notated preservation and dissemination of Ambrosian chant throughout

most of Northern Italy.¹ Even if, in reality, very few of the hymns composed by Ambrose himself were preserved, the core ritual and musical structure of the Ambrosian liturgy resisted through the centuries and, strongly supported by the local Church, survived numerous attempts to abolish it. The geographical diffusion of this liturgy contracted and expanded in lockstep with the fortunes of the city, such that for centuries the cathedral of Milan held a central position in the history of Italian music. In enumerating the marvels of the city in 1288, Bonvesin de la Riva cites the presence of a number of copyists and fourteen “doctors” (or masters) of Ambrosian chant, along with 1500 notaries and 150 surgeons.² This confirms what other documentary evidence indicates as well: for example, the large number of chant manuscripts known to have been compiled during the late Middle Ages.

If we shift our attention to the role of civil institutions in the promotion of musical activities, beginning in the communal age, Bonvesin, again, takes the time to describe in detail the “six principal trumpet players of the Comune, who are able to produce a sound so awesome, that it cannot be heard anywhere else in the world” and to explain that these Milanese performers “are honored and respected to a greater extent than any other trumpeters in the world.”³ All over Europe it was quite typical for players of wind instruments or percussion to be employed according to necessity; that is, they performed for specific events and occasions, such as accompanying officials when they proclaimed laws, attending public appearances of governing bodies, and riding with the militia. When, as in this case, a stable body of regularly salaried musicians is appointed, we usually take this as a sign of the importance of music within the civic apparatus. In fact, the proud Milanese poet acknowledges that these instrumentalists contribute to the greatness and strength of the city. Yet, at any rate, up until this point, life in Milan as in many other Italian cities

1 Compared to the reformed “Gregorian” chants and to what we know about the original “old Roman” repertory, the Ambrosian melodies are considerably more elaborate, and in addition, they typically avoid any skips or leaps in the melodic line, but rather proceed in almost exclusively stepwise, undulating motion throughout. On a more general level, Ambrosian chant also differs from the Roman/Gregorian liturgy in the title of the chants and their arrangement. See Terence Baily, “Ambrosian Chant,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Second Edition*, ed. by Stanley Sadie (London, 2001), i, pp. 452–61. The *New Grove Dictionary* is the standard musicological reference in English: the reader can refer to individual entries on terms and especially composers mentioned in this chapter (an online edition, periodically updated, is available on subscription at www.oxfordmusiconline.com).

2 Bonvesin de la Riva, *Mediolani Magnalia*, ed. by Maria Corti (Milan, 1974), 3:20.

3 Ibidem.

was burdened especially by war with their neighbors as well as by internal struggles. We do not have convincing documentary evidence of a significant lay music culture originating in Milan from the communal period or from the years in which the Della Torre and Visconti families were competing for power. Aside from the employment of state musicians described by Bonvesin, some first-hand accounts describe music at feasts and banquets, as well as the sporadic presence of poet-musicians in Milan and other cities in the Lombardy region. The latter presence was, however, more limited here than what was taking place, for example, in places like Ferrara, Verona, Treviso, Monferrato, and Saluzzo, where Occitan poetry was well cultivated along with the tradition of troubadour song.

As previously stated, concurrently with the affirmation of the Visconti dominion and its subsequent expansion (through diplomatic and matrimonial ties, rather than military means) even outside of Lombardy, musical historiography designates Milan and subsequently Pavia as centers of primary importance. The centrality of these cities does not stem from the quantity or social impact of extant music from the period. In fact, while a large part of Italian audiences at this time were still predominantly exposed to conventional musical events linked to the liturgy or to more ephemeral moments of entertainment (which leave no written trace), the musical innovations took place on a different level, which involved above all a restricted audience drawn from either court or political life. The most talented musicians of the period were busy exploring new compositional possibilities for polyphonic music and a notational system through which rhythm could be precisely determined by specific note-shapes and mensuration indications. The development of such system and of the rules of counterpoint that synchronized two or more independent melodies goes hand-in-hand with the adoption of vernacular poetry, and all of these elements were combined in an exceptionally cultured and refined musical repertory, which is often referred to as the Italian *ars nova*.⁴ We then realize that this process of creating new musico-poetic forms and styles involved Milan (that is, the Visconti and their entourage) at an early stage, and it seems to be worthwhile to take some space here to explain that these circumstances are revealed through indirect means and later sources.

4 The designation “ars nova” is borrowed from the contemporary French repertory, which rightly represents the evolution from a preceding phase referred to as “antiqua”. However, the situation through which the Italian repertory developed are very different, hence in today’s musicological scholarship we prefer to use “Trecento polyphony”.

The repertory of *madrigali*, *cacce*, and *ballate*⁵ composed from the 1330s on are preserved in a few retrospective anthologies whose compilation date from the later part of the fourteenth century. Composers are identified by name (and are even given introductory portraits in the lavishly illuminated Squarcialupi Codex), but for many of them, we have almost no biographical information. One of the most representative of the older generation, Jacopo da Bologna, is described by the chronicler Filippo Villani as “artis musice peritissimus” at Verona (another important musical center, along with Padua) during the final period of Mastino II Della Scala’s rule (1329–1351). A large part of the compositions attributed to Jacopo echo pastoral and courtly love themes in the vein of the troubadours, but he also engaged with encomiastic compositions. At least three of the latter reveal an unequivocal connection between Jacopo and Luchino Visconti. First and foremost, the tyrant’s name is hidden as an acrostic in a madrigale and in that of a Latin motet.⁶ The first text not only functions as an homage to Luchino, but also alludes to his third wife, Isabella Fieschi, and to the conspiracy headed by Francesco Pusterla, which was discovered and strictly punished in 1341. The second text sets to music a list of the virtues required of a good ruler, and the text also alludes to his brother Giovanni, archbishop of Milan. In another *madrigale* important political and familial events relevant to the Visconti in the year 1346 are celebrated with even more specificity: the birth of Luchino’s twin sons and their baptism in the cathedral of Parma, a city which was bought from Obizzo d’Este that year, ending a long war against the marquis of Ferrara. The resulting image is that of a tyrant merciless with his enemies but recognized (along with his brother) for having brought peace and justice to the Milanese government.⁷

5 These are the three main forms of the Trecento. The *madrigale* and *ballata* are short strophic compositions for two and three parts; *caccia* is a piece where the canonical technique is used to set in music text of variable structure, which often but not always describe excited scenes of hunting or fishing. This repertory is represented by eight sizeable sources (plus a number of fragments), including the famed *Squarcialupi Codex* (see *Il codice Squarcialupi* [vol. 1: Facsimile; vol. 2: Introductory Essays] ed. by F. Alberto Gallo (Lucca, 1992)).

6 A motet (from the French “petit mot”) is a polyphonic composition of prevailing use in France, characteristic for presenting two or more texts to be sung at the same time (often in different languages) elaborated in counterpoint over a liturgical motif in the lowest voice. Together with the Italian *madrigale* and the French *ballade* is one of the preferred forms of encomiastic music of the period.

7 Among the many contributions, it will suffice to cite the early account, still very useful, about the music and the Visconti by Geneviève Thibault, “Emblemes et devises des Visconti dans les oeuvres musicales du Trecento,” in *L’ars nova italiana del Trecento* (Certaldo, 1970), pp. 131–60. More recent views are summarized by Oliver Huck, “Music for Luchino, Bernabò and

The use of music as a means for encomiastic expression is by no means an absolute novelty. What is new here is the use of texts in the vernacular Italian and of the more advanced compositional techniques of the period. It is then relevant that, in the entire Trecento repertory, which includes numerous texts that refer to historical figures and events, there is no other ruler than Luchino whose name is mentioned so explicitly. It is not clear, however, if Luchino himself acted as the promoter of these works (and by consequence of the innovative musical leanings that they exemplify) or if rather it was the composer who sought the tyrant's favor and/or that of the archbishop, by presenting himself to court with these laudatory pieces dedicated to one or both of them.⁸ With regard to Luchino's cultural patronage, we know only that he hosted poets like Fazio degli Uberti and writers like Philippe de Mezières, that he may have been the founder of the family library, and that he engaged in a brief correspondence with Petrarch. Archbishop Giovanni, on the other hand, was not only known for his lavish banqueting, but had a distinguished fame among cultured men—and Petrarch spoke for all when he praised him as “one of the most magnificent men of the time.” From a purely chronological and geographical point of view, it is nonetheless a fact that Jacopo da Bologna had to have been part of the Visconti entourage for some period of time, and if we take other elements into account, he could not have been alone there. Considering that chroniclers of the period emphasize the passion of the Visconti family, and in particular that of Luchino, for the art of hunting, there is yet another work by Jacopo, this time a *caccia*, which contains clear intertextual connections to another describing a hunt on the banks of the Adda River set to music by the other two most important composers of the period, Giovanni da Cascia and Magister Piero, whose works were also recopied several times in the same Italian anthologies.⁹ Though the evidence is circumstantial at best, these clues form the basis for the current opinion that, at a certain point, all three composers must have worked at the Visconti court. It is, therefore, for this reason that Milan is considered to become one of the capitals of Italian music during Luchino's rule.

Gian Galeazzo Visconti,” in *Kontinuität und Transformation in der italienischen Vokalmusik zwischen Due- und Quattrocento*, ed. by Oliver Huck and Sandra Dieckmann (Hildesheim, Zürich and New York, 2007), pp. 247–58.

- 8 The latter is a recent hypothesis by Elena Abramov-Van Rijk, “Luchino Visconti, Jacopo da Bologna and Petrarch: Courting a Patron,” *Studi musicali* 31 (2012), pp. 7–62. This study is the most recent review of early Visconti patronage of music.
- 9 Among the similarities between the two texts, striking is the allusion in both to the same hound named “Varino.” On Jacopo, Giovanni, Piero and Trecento music in general see Michael Long, “Trecento Italy,” in *Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. by James McKinnon, *Man and Music* 1 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1991), pp. 241–68.

As previously stated, it is entirely possible that archbishop Giovanni may have had a considerable role in attracting and/or hosting these important musical figures in Milan, either before or after Luchino's death. In fact, the image of an "eagle," which recurs in other works of the period, may refer metaphorically to the archbishop, whose entourage, according to the Dominican Galvano Flamma, included a number of cithara players and singers.¹⁰

After Giovanni's death—at the times of the shared power of Matteo (for only one year), Galeazzo II and Bernabò, then of the rise of the star of Gian Galeazzo—the political marriages with the Este, Scaligeri, and Gonzaga families, and above all with the reigning house in France, together with the new efforts in territorial expansion, were among the influential elements in the new competitive impulse for splendor and elegance at the courts of Milan and Pavia. Still, in the second half of the century, in general, direct documentary proof about the employment of musicians is scarce. Chroniclers attest to the fact that Bernabò loved to surround himself with numerous and varied musical performances, even during military campaigns,¹¹ and it was rumored that musicians and singers were always welcome at the Visconti court.¹² Again, the best evidence comes from the consideration of the texts set to music in the period, which reveal connections between composers and their likely patrons; and, most interestingly, a substantial number of them contain heraldic or para-heraldic Visconti references. While there cannot always be complete agreement on the exact interpretation of these symbols, they make nonetheless clear that production of high-style music is again linked with the Visconti. Indeed and again, this music does not respond to the immediate practical, ceremonial, educative, or recreational exigencies of the court, but rather functions as a symbol of the social and political edification of a particular family and its leaders—ruling over most of Lombardy yet striving for legitimization, at least until the creation of the dukedom in 1395. Within the span of nearly fifty years

10 Galvanei de la Flamma, *Opusculum de rebus gestis ab Azone, Luchino et Johanne vicecomitibus*, ed. by Carlo Castiglioni (Bologna, 1938), p. 35 (cited in several recent contributions).

11 Conforto da Costozza, *Frammenti di storia vicentina*, ed. by Carlo Steiner (Città di Castello, 1915), p. 17 (also cited by several recent authors).

12 The singer, organist and lutenist Dolcibene, a friend of Franco Sacchetti and protagonist in many of his short stories, "having heard of the fame and magnanimity of Master Bernabò and Master Galeazzo . . . and of their honored and magnificent court" decided to establish himself in Milan, where "he was well received and highly esteemed for his virtues, creating his *canzonette* in meters with very pleasant words and setting them to sweet melodies, for which he received many gifts from many gentlemen and lords who were at the court at that time." From Giovanni Gherardi da Prato, *Il Paradiso degli Alberti*, ed. by A. Lanza, (Rome, 1975), pp. 201–2. No compositions by this Dolcibene are extant.

between the deaths of Giovanni and Gian Galeazzo, several composers, most of whom are just known by their names, some not even that, demonstrate their awareness of the family's circumstances by frequently including symbols of Visconti power and references to central events within their compositions. References to important marriages were especially common, for example: Bernabo's marriage to Beatrice della Scala in 1350 and Gian Galeazzo's weddings to Isabelle de Valois in 1360 and to his cousin Caterina in 1380.

One interesting aspect of this phenomenon is that now such musico-political works were composed not only by authors living in Milan, but also by others from various cities outside of Lombardy, which were either controlled by Visconti rule or under the threat of their growing expansionism. So, "Visconti" music (pro and against them) was to be heard throughout the entire Italian peninsula, which Gian Galeazzo wished to unify. It has also been noted that composers have tended to make reference to para-heraldic symbols (such as the leopard, the dove-in-sun badge, as well as the mottos "Souffrir m'estuet," "A bon droyt," and the word "virtù") in reference to individual rulers, like Bernabò and especially Gian Galeazzo, rather than using the heraldry or the family emblems of the Visconti *tout court* (such as the viper, or the knot). This kind of compositional choice reflects the gradual rise in the importance of the individual *signore* in comparison to the power of the dynasty or of the state in general. Moreover, it is noteworthy that, as the century progresses, we begin to encounter more and more French texts and musico-poetic forms as the basis for such musical encomia. This phenomenon is neither new nor exclusive to the Visconti, but very much paramount to them, and this must have to do with their dynastic ties to the house of Valois and overall preference for French culture.¹³ Thus, despite Milan's initial role in the development of a specifically "Italian" polyphonic music, this tendency begins to change as French texts, forms, and even musicians are sought after more so than their Italian counterparts. The capital of Italian-speaking secular polyphony is then

13 In addition to the above bibliography, see: Reinhard Strohm, "Filipotto da Caserta, ovvero i Francesi in Lombardia," in *In cantu et in sermone. For Nino Pirrotta on His 80th Birthday*, ed. by Fabrizio Della Seta and Franco Piperno, (Florence, 1989), pp. 65–74; F. Alberto Gallo, *Music in the Castle* (Chicago and London, 1995; first published as *Musica nel castello*, Bologna, 1992); John Nádas and Agostino Ziino, *The Lucca Codex (Codice Mancini): Introductory Study and Facsimile Edition* (Lucca, 1990). An analytical study of the use of heraldry in this repertory is by Sarah M. Carleton, "Heraldry in the Trecento Madrigal," Ph.D. diss. (Univ. of Toronto, 2009).

transferred to Francesco Landini's Florence, where a majority of extant manuscripts are to be compiled.¹⁴

It must be also stressed again that most of the music described thus far was intended for an elite, restricted audience. Not only were these increasingly elaborate compositions rich in technical subtleties that could be appreciated only by an expert ear, but their polyphonic, often polytextual construction often required visual as well as aural interpretation in order to reveal their metaphorical allusions. The overall message to the audience was that such multilayered subtlety sprung from the generosity and exquisiteness of the enlightened nobleman, whose identity was to be discovered behind metaphores and allusions. The separation between the music meant for public occasions and that which was cultivated in private settings can be represented, for instance, by two pieces of evidence related to the coronation of Gian Galeazzo Visconti as Duke of Milan on September 10, 1395. On the one hand, there is a miniature in the missal prepared for the occasion that represents a large group of trumpeters taking part in the ceremony. Here, again, the salaried trumpeters of the city are depicted along with, most likely, ducal reinforcements due to the special occasion. On the other hand, a madrigal by Antonello da Caserta, a composer whose life has been scarcely documented, refers metaphorically to the "glorious title" of the "new Augustus given to Italy in order to spread its fame again."¹⁵ In the earliest years of the dukedom, the separation between the public and private approaches to musical performance was made even clearer because Gian Galeazzo took up residence at his beloved castle in Pavia, where recent studies hypothesize that Gian Galeazzo's presence attracted a large number of important instrumentalists and composers from Italy and beyond the Alps.¹⁶ In the meantime, in Milan, public spectacles of allegorical-dramatic plays with music were being organized in connection with the construction of the new

14 For the later developments of Trecento music and the role of Florentine musicians see again Long, *Trecento Italy* and *Il codice Squarcialupi*. For a broader historical perspective of Italian and French (and European) music after 1380 see Reinhard Strohm, *The Rise of European Music 1380–1500* (Cambridge, 2005).

15 Nádas and Ziino, *The Lucca Codex*, p. 38.

16 Records exist of payments made to ultramontane performers employed by Gian Galeazzo, and various famed composers either of French-Flemish origin or associated with ultramontane courts (including papal Avignon) have been associated to Bernabò then Gian Galeazzo. Hypotheses are discussed in the cited studies by Strohm, Nádas and Ziino, Carleton but see also Anne Stone, "A Singer at the Fountain: Homage and Irony in Cicconia's 'Sus une fontayne,'" *Music and Letters* 83 (2001), pp. 361–90; Y. Plumley, "An Episode in the South? Ars Subtilior and the Patronage of French Princes," *Early Music History* 22 (2003), pp. 103–68.

Duomo, a mammoth project that in the following century will become more and more a significant propellant of musical life in Milan.

As is well known, the death of Gian Galeazzo marked the point of rapid disintegration in the fortunes of the Visconti and of the borders of the dukedom. The years under the leadership of the young and incompetent Giovanni Maria (1402–12) and the crude Filippo Maria (1412–47) were above all decades of the most arduous and unstinting military campaigns. Decembrio describes Filippo Maria as a man who was neither interested in any courtly entertainment nor concerned with patronizing artistic or intellectual activity. This claim is supported by the absence of documents that might confirm the duke's direct employment of any musicians at his court. Yet, the duke was engaged in supporting the development of music at the cathedral—thus continuing the work of Gian Galeazzo, who in 1394 had given some directions for the Duomo's musical activity, which would eventually lead to the appointment of the organist Monte di Prato.

Within the same year of 1402 that Gian Galeazzo died, the theologian Peter Philargis from Candia (future antipope Alexander V) was ordained as the new bishop of Milan. Philargis had moved from Paris to Pavia, by 1385 at the latest, in order to work not just as a lecturer in theology, but also as a key diplomat and advisor to Gian Galeazzo (a role in which he likely contributed in earning to the Duke that “glorioso titolo” celebrated in music by Antonello). Most importantly for us, in the very same year 1402 the composer Matteo da Perugia was hired as the first “biscantor” of the Duomo. The latter coincidence may not have been accidental after all: after Innocent VII made Philargis a cardinal in 1405, Matteo da Perugia would alternate between his service in the cathedral (documented in the years until 1407 and again 1414–16/18) and membership in the cardinal's *familia* (so he could have been before in the prelate's service in Pavia). Anyway, his duties at the Duomo were, on the one hand, to teach in a music school associated with the cathedral and in particular to instruct three *pueri cantores* chosen by the Deputies of the *Fabbrica*; on the other hand, to “sing in every solemn feast, honoring the church with sweet melodies.” His job title, deriving from the term *discantus* (a type of note-against-note polyphony on a plainchant melody) clarifies that polyphonic performance was sought, at least in occasion of major solemnities, in addition to the daily use of Ambrosian chant in the liturgy. Polyphonic performance required special skills and professional singers; this favored all over Europe the establishment of musical chapels (ensembles of singers of variable size) in cathedrals and within the palaces of European kings and princes, but also of bishops and cardinals. Among the most notable examples were the papal chapel (first established in Avignon, then duplicated in Rome during the period of Great Schism, with even a third

one after the Council of Pisa employed by pope Philargis), and the chapel of the dukes of Burgundy—and French and Flemish musicians were, above all, the most sought after for the job. Matteo interests us most as the author of twenty or so compositions that have survived; at least one of his extant works is strictly linked to his work at the Duomo, a polyphonic elaboration of an antiphon that exists only in the Ambrosian church rite, which demonstrates the great influence and permanence of the previously discussed Milanese liturgical tradition also on musicians coming from outside Lombardy.¹⁷ Following the custom of the day, in addition to his work as a church musician, Matteo composed secular polyphonic works on French texts, and in this, he may be placed in line with the other aforementioned composers working with French texts and musical forms in Milan and Pavia under Visconti patronage.

During the last years of Visconti rule another known composer of liturgical and sacred music was in Milan, Beltrand Feragut from Avignon. He arrived in 1425, from the service of Pandolfo III Malatesta in Brescia, to take up the position originally held by Matteo, which he held for only five years. The chapel was still not a fully-formed one (comprising of three singers along with the *magister* of the *schola*, his three *pueri*, and an organist) and Beltrand went on to a better employment in Ferrara, then Vicenza, Florence, and eventually he returned to France at the court of René of Anjou. As far as we can tell, none of his extant compositions can be dated to his Milanese years, leaving this period with no further evidence of noteworthy activity. In fact, to register another significant event we need to wait until 1448 when the construction of a second organ of the Duomo was approved and to 1454 when for the first time there are reports of three French musicians employed in the cathedral, even if only temporarily. At this point Milan was undergoing the years of the short-lived Republic that preceded the rule of the Sforza. Then in 1464, under Francesco I, not only was the decision made to build yet another organ and to entrust its construction to one of the finest organ makers of the time, Bernardo d'Alemania, but also the new figure of the *prior* of the singers is documented:

17 See Brad Maiani, "Notes on Matteo da Perugia: Adapting the Ambrosian Liturgy in Polyphony for the Pisan Council," *Studi musicali* 23 (1994), pp. 3–28. For Matteo and his context, see the recent introductory study to the facsimile of a manuscript closely associated with him: Anne Stone, *The Manuscript Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Alpha.M.5.24. Commentary* (Lucca, 2005). Here a song by Matteo is discussed with references to the para-heraldry of Filippo Maria Visconti.

Santino Taverna is assigned the task of expanding the personnel, which then came to include new singers of both Italian and French origin.¹⁸

This gradual increase in importance of musical activity in the Duomo, however, was soon outshined by the most significant development in Milan's early history: the creation and spectacular growth of the Ducal chapel, which quickly surpassed the Duomo's chapel in both size and quality. Duke Francesco had already started the process in 1456 by entrusting his "*familiar* and singer" Donato Cagnola with recruiting others to create a musical group to perform in liturgical services held within the court. Francesco was a mercenary captain who had risen to power through a combination of fortune and shrewdness as the husband of the last (illegitimate) offshoot of the Visconti, Bianca Maria. A close friend of Cosimo de Medici, he welcomed the humanist Francesco Filelfo to Milan, introducing Renaissance learning and culture to his court; yet, in reality, he should be defined as a moderate patron of arts and culture, especially in comparison with what his son Galeazzo was to do during his relatively short reign from 1466 to 1476. These years were a period of exceptional blossoming. Bernardino Corio described Galeazzo as such: "He was exceedingly liberal, eager for glory and to be feared. He held it dear that one could say with truth that his court was one of the most splendid in the universe. He was magnificent in his trappings and his manner of living and his court was above all most splendid."¹⁹ As the official chronicler for Ludovico il Moro, Corio's accounts are usually considered biased and embellished, but in this case his words indeed complement the enthusiasm that the size and lavishness of Galeazzo's chapel inspire in modern music historians. Corio again: "The duke took great delight in song, for which he kept about thirty Northern singers, honourably paid by him, and amongst whom there was one called Cordiero, to whom he gave a salary of 100 ducats a month. And the ornaments in his chapel were such that they could be valued at 100,000 ducats." General histories emphasize

18 The vast literature on music and musicians under the Sforza has been enriched in 1999 by a 500-page documentary history by Paul A. Merkley and Laura L.M. Merkley, *Music and Patronage in the Sforza Court* (Turnhout, 1999) which is the base reference for the remainder of this chapter. Earlier general contributions are those by Gaetano Cesari, "Musica e musicisti alla corte sforzesca", *Rivista musicale italiana* 29 (1922), pp. 1–53 and Guglielmo Barblan, "Vita musicale alla corte sforzesca" in *Storia di Milano* [Treccani], 16 vols. (Milan, 1953–62), ix, pp. 183–254.

19 Bernardino Corio, *Storia di Milano*, ed. by E. de Magri (Milan, 1885) here (and in the following quotation) cited in the translation by Evelyn S. Welch, *Art and Authority in Renaissance Milan* (New Haven, 1995), p. 212.

Galeazzo's special disposition to use artistic patronage as a propaganda tool, which functions to sanction his personal power in domestic and foreign policy. It is unusual though, and therefore striking, that the quest for this splendor was pursued principally through a musical institution; yet it is true that music, more than any other art, is the area that retrospectively bestowed upon Galeazzo "international renown for the quality and sophistication of his patronage."²⁰ The importance of Galeazzo's contributions to the development of music can be summarized here in discussing four main aspects: the size and structure of the chapel, the manner in which it was assembled, the excellence of its personnel, and its influence on musical life in Milan and in the duchy.

1. Regarding the chapel's size, the musicians employed by Galeazzo increased from the four singers reported at the beginning of his rule, to the 35 to 40 names, several of whom were from France and the Low Countries, found in accounts dated after 1474.²¹ There are some records of musicians visiting Milan and seeking employment (for example on the occasion of the Duke's wedding in 1468) as well as of a few who were hired and did not continue.²² But the major upsurge in music patronage took place in the years 1471–72, when an impressive body of singers was recruited. Scholars have associated this with the competition that started with Ercole d'Este when he began to boost his own musical entourage after his accession to the duchy of Ferrara in August 1471. For both patrons, (which were also in competition with the Neapolitan court), the aim was to replicate the greatness of the famous Burgundian chapel of Philip the Good.²³ In general terms, while public ensembles were paid by either government organizations or guilds (with possible interventions from private donors), the singers of court chapels received their salaries directly from the head of the ruling family. As representatives of the court's magnificence and, in their liturgical function, of the personal piety of the ruling family, they helped to reinforce their patron's authority if not effectively legitimize it. This kind of contribution was especially necessary to the Sforza family, who governed without the imperial title until the reign of Ludovico.

20 Evelyn S. Welch, "Sight, Sound and Ceremony in the Chapel of Galeazzo Maria Sforza," *Early Music History* 12 (1993), pp. 151–90, at p. 153.

21 Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, p. 101.

22 Gregory Lubkin, Review of Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 55 (2002), p. 350.

23 Lewis Lockwood, "Strategies of Musical Patronage in the Fifteenth Century: The Cappella of Ercole I d'Este," in *Music in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Patronage, Sources and Texts*, ed. by Iain Fenlon (Cambridge, 1981) pp. 227–48 at pp. 232–33.

Physically separated from the everyday places and activities of the citizens, access to the duke's musicians depended on one's rank: only those who were admitted to the palace were given the further privilege of taking part in the services. If the larger populace benefitted from such a scenario at all, this happened only as a reflex (examples of this will be mentioned later on).²⁴ One striking characteristic of what for simplicity may be called Galeazzo's enormous "chapel" is the fact that there were two separate and distinct performing ensembles: a court chapel (the *capella* tout court); and the "cappella della camera," the duke's personal chapel, which was accessible to an even more restricted group. In comparison with only a few years earlier, when the highest manifestation of musical adornment of the liturgy was that performed by the cathedral singers, the choice to create not one but two musical entities in the ducal palace generates a further level of separation of the sovereign, who thus enjoys an even more privileged, quasi-personal connection to the divine. (Incidentally: in Milan, as in other places, musical patronage was not limited only to the practice of sacred music; Galeazzo also funded a healthy number of instrumentalists. Nevertheless, following a centuries old tradition, vocal repertoires, especially polyphonic and unaccompanied, was held in higher esteem than instrumental music; it was there that the Duke's efforts were mostly concentrated.)

2. In order to recruit his musicians, Galeazzo put in place an extraordinary and unyielding campaign, which clearly attests to the importance of musical activity for the duke. Some singers simply passed from the Duomo to the court while others were transferred from the employment of Cardinal Branda Castiglione. But most of them were acquired from various musical capitals of Europe; these new acquisitions were often pilfered from other chapels, such as those of Savoy, Naples, the papal chapel in Rome, Ferrara, Mantua, France, and Burgundy. In the competition for musical prestige, Galeazzo participated personally by devising strategies and sending agents to obtain information and to conduct auditions and interviews of possible candidates, in order to acquire the best possible singers. He tackled the competition of other patrons not only by promising his musicians very generous wages, but also by using indirect compensation, such as ecclesiastical benefices, as leverage. This was a tried and true practice: through agreements with the local Church or more frequently through the intervention of the papal chancery, European rulers could acquire

24 See also Franco Piperno, "Suoni della sovranità. Le cappelle musicali fra storiografia generale e storia della musica," in *Cappelle musicali fra corte, stato e chiesa nell'Italia della prima età moderna*, ed. by Franco Piperno, Gabriella Biagi Ravenni and Andrea Chegai (Firenze, 2007), pp. 11–57.

the preemptive right to bestow ecclesiastical benefices (especially those *sine cura animarum*) which were linked to stipends and pensions that could significantly increase one's income from professional employment. Galeazzo was able to take control of a great number of benefices so that as soon as they became vacant they could be assigned to the members of his entourage, his singers included, thus allowing him to enter into direct competition with kings and even with the pope.

3. In this type of competition, one could certainly discern the presence of a warlike component; indeed, in his desire to outstrip his rivals, the duke achieved supremacy through cunning (and financial) force. Yet, as various documents indicate, the duke's emissaries were looking not only for quantity of singers but for exceptional musical expertise, and beyond technical singing abilities. A 1473 letter from the bishop of Novara and emissary to Rome, Giovanni Arcimboldo, to Galeazzo provides an example of the duke's high standards in recruitment in its account of a recent disillusionment. One singer, who had been recommended for an audition, had turned out not only to have "a bad and goat-like voice," but also to be "a performer who only sings by practice and has no theoretical basis, as he himself admits;" therefore, Arcimboldo concludes, "your excellency does not need him."²⁵ If the criteria for recruitment were indeed this demanding, one must then infer that the median professional level within the chapel was very high: the simple fact of belonging to the Milanese chapel seems to offer modern historians a proof of its members' musical prowess, even of those who are not well known beyond their names. In fact, if one looks further, it is evident that for a few years several of the best musicians of the day traveled to Milan, including a number of Franco-flemish composers from beyond the Alps, some of whom were leading mass, motet and chanson composers of the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Among these, we should at the very least mention Loyset Compère (d. 1518), who had come from the Royal French chapel, and Johannes Martini (d. 1498), who was originally from the Low Countries ("stolen" from the Este chapel, even if for one year only). Among the singers *tout court* (those for whom we have no evidence of activity also as composers) the previously mentioned "Cordiero," or Jean Cordier before arriving in Milan had been employed in Florence as well as the papal chapel and later the Aragonese court of Naples. This singer is famed for having been at the center of one of the most striking and revealing episodes in the history of the chapel's formation, one which for a little while broke down the already strained diplomatic relations between Milan and Naples.

25 Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, p. 65 (I adjusted the translation).

He was convinced (financially) by Galeazzo's emissaries to leave King Ferrante's chapel without any warning or permission from his patron. Initial protests transformed into an harsh controversy that sky-rocketed to such a point that none other than the eminent Charles the Bold of Burgundy was employed to arbitrate in the matter.²⁶ For a number of years scholars have included in the Milanese group also Josquin Desprez, the greatest composer of the period, an assumption derived from a false identification, for Josquin did not work for Galeazzo, but only for Ludovico and for a very short period. Perhaps the most important figure in Galeazzo's musical establishment was Caspar van Weerbeke (d. 1517), composer and singer from Tournai. In his role of leader of the *capella de camera* he took charge of identifying, evaluating, and finally recruiting dozens of new members with ample freedom of expenditure, especially in France and Burgundy during two successive expeditions there.

4. A mention remains to be made of the influence of Galeazzo's musical patronage on civic musical life. As a result of the expansion of the ducal chapel the development of the cathedral choir had been markedly slowed down in this period. It was the ducal chapel then, despite its purposeful seclusion within the walls of the palace, that was employed in the cathedral and other churches on several occasions of special solemnity. It is important to note that the musical apparatus was not necessarily there to accompany or emphasize the presence of the Duke; on the contrary, in many circumstances Galeazzo was not even present. For instance, for the special celebration of 1473 held in Pavia on the occasion of the creation of Giovanni Arcimboldo as a cardinal, Galeazzo was away in Vigevano but provided detailed instructions—including the explicit request that the mass should strictly follow the Ambrosian rite. In the same year Galeazzo was also absent both when the chapel performed in Milan at the Duomo for the annual celebration of his own access to the duchy on St George's day, and for Pentecost at the church of S. Spirito, where he recommended that his singers should be arranged in a side chapel so that they could be more easily heard by the populace.²⁷ Galeazzo also followed in the footsteps of his predecessors by organizing magnificent public performances in the Duomo during which both civic and ducal instrumentalists took part (the number of city *pifferi* and *trombetti* did not increase very much with the Sforza, but Ludovico's payroll records a group three times as big). In sum, once established in their role of representing the magnificence of the court and its

26 Richard J. Walsh, "Music and Quattrocento Diplomacy: the Singer Jean Cordier Between Milan, Naples and Burgundy in 1475," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 60 (1968), pp. 439–42; Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, p. 53ff.

27 Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, pp. 93–99; Lubkin, Review, p. 352.

head, the duke's musical ensembles were brought out of the palace to represent the union between the city (with ritual elements traditionally associated with it, for example the Ambrosian liturgy) and its ruler.

Following Galeazzo's assassination in 1476, the years of the regency of Bona of Savoy saw a sudden decline of the ducal music establishment. Many singers—including Johannes Cordier, in the words of Bona herself "the greatest ornament of the chapel"—moved elsewhere, also because the system put in place by Galeazzo to supplement the nominal pay with the acquisition of ecclesiastical benefices was in jeopardy. Another great loss was the departure of Weerbeke who went on to Rome in 1480 to take on the leadership of the papal choir. The chapel did continue its existence, to be revived later on with the return of a few musicians (for instance, Cordier in 1487 and Weerbeke in 1489) and the accession of notable others. But in the meantime, the Duomo's authorities had been prompted to reinforce their own musical institution in order to guarantee the fulfillment of the liturgical service and in 1477, after almost a century after the hire of the first *magister* of the *schola*, the figure of *magister capelle* was officially introduced, with the membership of the chapel stabilized at what was the average size of cathedral choirs of the time, that is, ten singers plus the master.

With Ludovico's rise to power in the 1480s and finally his official enthronement in 1489, indeed it is possible to recognize a renewed impulse of the Sforza musical patronage, but with notable differences with the recent past. One change was dictated by the new situation of the Duomo, where the chapel expanded, reclaiming its role as the city's focal point in regard to sacred music, and the duke seconded that development. In fact, at the same time in the palace other musical genres and practices began to be favoured, for example instrumental music, and the *frottola* repertory (strophic songs in simple three- or four-part polyphony with instruments) and this also due to the influence of Beatrice d'Este, wife of Ludovico from 491, a keyboard player herself.²⁸

28 It is worth reminding that Beatrice was the younger sister of Isabella d'Este, wife of Francesco Gonzaga, the remarkable patroness of arts and music (William Prizer, "Isabella d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia as Patrons of Music: The Frottola at Mantua and Ferrara," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 38 (1985), pp. 1–33). She was a lute player, well acquainted with the instrumentalists and *frottole* composers Bartolomeo Tromboncino and Marchetto Cara who were mainly employed in Mantua but traveled frequently to other neighboring cities including Ferrara and Milan. Isabella and Beatrice (together with Elisabetta Gonzaga and Lucrezia Borgia) established an artistic and musical network that gave impulse not only to composition and performance but also to the making of musical instruments.

Moreover, in comparison with Galeazzo's years, when his extraordinary ensemble of ultramontane singers and composers rose to prominence, Ludovico's rule is marked by a broader action, toward the flourishing of literature and the visual arts, including architecture, which benefited also other areas such as the promotion of higher education or development of urban décor. The names that are to be recalled are those of Filelfo, Leonardo, Bramante, *then* Gafori and Josquin: we can safely say that music played its role among other cultural manifestations, in the making of the golden age of Renaissance Milan. Lastly, whereas Galeazzo was the main architect of music patronage during his rule, other individuals were at work in parallel with Ludovico.

Together with the above mentioned Beatrice, emblematic is the figure of Ascanio Sforza, brother to Galeazzo and Ludovico, to whom recent research has recognized the merit of having brought to Milan (and to Italy) Josquin Deprez, the "most varied in invention and the most profound in expression" of 15th-century composers (1450–1521).²⁹ As mentioned before, until recently Josquin was thought to have been in Milan from the 1470s, serving in the chapel of Galeazzo and hence interacting with Weerbecke and his distinguished colleagues in the shaping of the repertory of the time. However, evidence of a Milanese period for Josquin is circumscribed to two dates: 1489, when he is documented as a singer for the newly empowered duke (we don't know from what year but not for long after that date, since in the same year he started his service in the papal chapel); 1484, when he first appears in the records in the *familia* of Ascanio Sforza, in the latter's first supplication to the pope as newly-created cardinal. Ascanio had in his entourage other musicians, including the poet-composer Serafino (Ciminelli) dall'Aquila and the music theorist Florentius de Faxolis. When exactly Josquin entered Ascanio's service is unknown but this is only tangentially relevant to Milanese history, since between the two verified dates 1484 and 1489 the cardinal and presumably his *familia* were often outside Milan, especially in Rome.³⁰

29 Josquin has been the object of a great deal of research over the past forty years. New biographical findings uncovered in the last ten years have dramatically changed our views of his life and chronology of works but also of the music of the time. See: Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, pp. 425–490 and *passim*; *The Josquin Companion*, ed. by Richard Sherr (Oxford, 2001); David Fallows, *Josquin* (Turnhout, 2005).

30 As it is well known, before 1484 Ascanio had been in exile in Pavia, Ferrara and Naples. The connection between the composer and the duke's brother are not only established by archival documents: a 1510 Venetian music print contains an attribution of a *frottola* to "Josquin d'Ascanio"; Serafino dall'Aquila (1466–1500) wrote a sonnet "Ad Jusquino his fellow musician of Ascanio". Ascanio was an amateur musician himself and for him the lombard priest Florentius de Faxolis (1461–96) wrote a *Liber musices* recently re-examined:

One point of continuity with Galeazzo was the employment of ducal singers not only in the palace's chapel, but also in various Milanese churches, and of the participation of all vocal and instrumental ensembles in public representations with music, civic and political ceremonies such as embassies, legations, and weddings. This is where ducal musicians, especially instrumentalists, were employed elsewhere in the Duchy and Italy, and also abroad.

As for the Duomo, as mentioned before, the duke favored the independent expansion of the chathedral chapel, and variously supported the hire and the activity of another influential musical figure of the period, Franchino Gafori (Gaffurius) da Lodi, who was *magister capelle* from 1484 until his death in 1522.³¹ Previously in Verona and Genoa as a teacher, then in Naples and Bergamo as choimaster, Gafori is especially known for a number of learned and influential theoretical works devoted to both speculative and practical matters—he was an avid researcher of earlier writings including ancient Greek theory—the most important of which were printed in Milan and dedicated to the duke (*Theorica musicae*, second edition, in 1492 and *Practica musicae*, in 1496). A third one, the *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus*, written by the closing years of the century but whose publication was delayed until 1518, brought to completion Franchino's encyclopedic project of a comprehensive exposition inspired by the tripartite subdivision of musical thought of Boethian descent. As a teacher, Gafori worked in the Duomo to ensure that the *pueri cantores* would receive a good general education, but also taught in the *Gymnasium* founded by Ludovico, in the first chair of music in an European university.

Under Gafori the membership of the Duomo chapel rised up to fifteen singers, all of whom were Italians, a crucial distinction to make, since the duke's chapel still favored the employment of foreigners. This is also linked to the particular circumstance that Franchino is one of the very few known 15th-century native Italian composers of sacred polyphony, still regarded as the highest musical genre. The composition of polyphonic mass and motet was still almost a unique prerogative of Franco-Flemish authors, whose music was distinctive for the complexity of its quasi-mathematical construction, while Italian composers were exploring more straightforward means of musico-poetic expression, forming a repertory of songs most often to be accompanied by instruments (the already mentioned *frottole* repertory).

Florentius de Faxolis, *Book on Music*, ed. and transl. by Bonnie Blackburn and Leofranc Holford-Strevens (Cambridge, Mass., 2010).

31 A biographical account by Pantaleone Malegolo was inserted in the 1518 print of Gafori's *De harmonia*; major studies include: Alessandro Caretta, Luigi Cremascoli and Luigi Salamina, *Franchino Gaffurio* (Lodi, 1951); Claude V. Palisca, *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* (New Haven, CT, 1985), esp. pp. 191–232.

Gafori's works—polyphonic masses, motets and hymns, which exhibit a blend of the two stylistic tendencies—, are preserved in four choirbooks in the Duomo archive (the so-called *libroni*, “the big books”) the compilation of which was sponsored by the duke and oversaw by Franchino. These volumes are priceless witnesses of the music that was heard in Milan for decades. In addition to Gafori's works they preserve a number of pieces by other authors that had been once active in Milan in the ducal chapel, the already mentioned Weerbecke, Martini, Compère, Josquin, and by others whose works were evidently also circulating in Milan. Without these books we would have lacked the evidence of an experimental genre, evidently explored by the musicians active in Milan, probably inaugurated by Compère: that of votive motets mostly addressed to the Virgin, assembled in cycles that, as the *libroni* prescribe, are to be sung as an alternative to some of the usual sections of the Mass. Gafori refers to these motets as *motteti ducales*, suggesting that either Galeazzo would have supported this liturgical practice or the compositions themselves, or simply that they were still circulating in the repertory of the ducal chapel in Gaffurio's own (and Ludovico's) time. (While we are confident about our ability to piece together evidence for the patronage of musicians, it is not always equally easy to find out about the patronage of the music itself. One of the *motetti missales* cycle bears the title of *Missa Gaelazescha*, indicating at least in this case a strong connection with the duke.) One of the reasons for the modern interest in these compositions (and perhaps for the interest of Gafori himself, who evidently was inspired by the finding of the earlier examples to compose his own cycle) is that these are examples of a simplified style of polyphony which may reflect again a stylistic compromise between the ultramontane intricacies and peninsular straightforwardness but enacted by foreign composers. They also raise questions from a liturgical standpoint, because the removal and substitution of important fixed elements of the mass is rather unusual, and also because some of these motets are labeled as substitutions for chants, such the Agnus Dei, which are not part of the official Ambrosian liturgy. This is a sign of the ongoing influence that the Roman rite was exerting, after all, and of the need of the local authorities both ecclesiastical and civic to reassert the centrality of the traditional repertory.³²

32 See Thomas L. Noblitt, “The Ambrosian ‘Motetti Missales’ Repertory”, *Musica disciplina*, 22 (1968), pp. 77–103; Merkeley, *Music and Patronage*, pp. 321–57; this repertory has recently been brought to the new attention of a broad audience of music students by Richard Taruskin, *Music from the Earliest Notations to the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: 2010), pp. 518–26.

Gafori's quest for the recovery of the classical tradition of music theory, while he was involved in music making, teaching and writing about practical matters; his pursuit for tempering Flemish intricacy and Italian smooth idiom makes him the musical champion of Renaissance Milan. His long career extended beyond the fall of the Duchy, a splendid cultural experience in which the driving and attractive force of the Sforza had made Milan one of the capitals of European music.

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Music in the 16th and 17th Centuries

Christine Getz

Introduction

The competition between France and the Hapsburg Empire for control of the Duchy of Milan in the early 16th century appears to have rendered the existence of musicians in Milan fairly transient. After the fall of the Ludovico Sforza in 1499 and the exile of his sons to the court of Maximilian I of Austria at Innsbruck, the church remained the only stable avenue for the patronage of musicians. The tenure of Franchinus Gaffurius as maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Milan, begun in 1484 during the regency of Ludovico Sforza, continued uninterrupted until Gaffurius's death in 1522, and even resulted in the legacy of the four Milan choir books containing polyphonic repertoire associated with the former Sforza court and the Milanese cathedral during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. The sacred repertoire by Gaffurius that appears in them remains the primary touchstone of musical culture for early 16th century Milan.¹

Music Celebrating the Sforza Restoration

The major turning point in the fortunes of the Sforza, the victory over the French forces at Pavia in 1525, was perhaps less a watershed than a significant blip on the proverbial radar screen when it came to the revival of musical activity in Milan. The victory not only inspired various commemorative woodcuts and

1 On Gaffurius's tenure at the Duomo of Milan see Claudio Sartori, "La cappella del Duomo delle origini a Franchino Gaffurio," *Storia di Milano*, 16 vols (Milan, 1961), 9: 725–34. Facsimile editions of the first three Milan choir books, which are thought to have been copied during the last decade of the fifteenth century and the first decade of the sixteenth, are in *Milan, Archivio della Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo, Sezione Musicale, Librone 1–3 (olim 2267–2269)*, ed. Howard Mayer Brown (New York and London, 1987), while the fourth, which bears a date of 22 June 1527, is photographed in *Liber cappelle ecclesie maioris; quarto codice di Gaffurio*, eds Angelo Ciceri and Luciano Migliavacca, (Archivum musices metropolitenum mediolanense) 16 (Milano, 1968). The latter series also contains modern editions of the works of Gaffurius.

tapestries,² but also a three-section Italian villotta for four voices by Gaffurius's successor Hermann Matthias Werrecore, who served as maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Milan from 1522 to 1550. Using a simple harmonic palette, quotations from soldiers' songs, and onomatopoeic devices, Werrecore's *La bataglia tagliana* colorfully recounts the action on the battlefield using musical figures inspired by the content of *La Guerre*, Clément Jannequin's programmatic chanson written in commemoration of the French victory over the Italian forces at Marignano in 1515.³ As Marco Brusa has shown, Werrecore, who claimed to have witnessed the conflict at Pavia first-hand in the introduction to a German print dated 1544, actually reworked the text from a version of the piece he had written following the victory at Bicocca three years earlier.⁴ Whatever its initial inspiration, Werrecore's *La bataglia tagliana* was reprinted several times in both its original vocal incarnation and in instrumental intabulations. Its dissemination via several Italian and German prints, two of which contain three other villotte by the composer,⁵ points not only to the popularity of the piece, but also to the important role that print culture played in the preservation of Milanese music from the 16th and 17th centuries. Aside from the manuscript collections associated with several ecclesiastical institutions such as the Duomo of Milan, it is largely music prints rather than manuscripts that preserve the music literature of early modern Milan, for many of the manuscript sources appear to have been destroyed during the 19th-century Napoleonic suppression of ecclesiastical orders and the successive world wars.

The victory over the French at Pavia in 1525 and the subsequent celebrations of the restoration of the Sforza beginning in 1529 also inspired three occasional motets for Francesco Sforza II by composers with only loose or unclear associations to the young duke. Two of these, *Victor io salve/Quis curare neget* and *Inclite Sfortiadum princeps*, were contributed by Adrian Willaert, then in the service of Ippolito II d'Este of Ferrara, titular Archbishop of Milan, and published by Girolamo Scotto of Venice in Willaert's first book of five-voice

2 These include an anonymous woodcut in Pavia, Museo Civico, and a woodcut by Jorg Breü the Elder, as well as the Flemish tapestries designed for Alfonso D'Avalos, Marchese del Vasto, by Bernard Von Orley of the house of Pannemaker around 1531.

3 The soldiers' songs were first identified by Michel Brenet, *Musique et musiciens de la vieille France* (Paris, 1911), pp. 135–55.

4 Marco Brusa, "Hermann Matthais Werrecoren 'maestro di cappella del Domo di Milano' 1522–1550. Biografia. Bibliografia. Elenco delle opere," *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra* xv/3–4 (1994), pp. 186–92.

5 Mathias Fiamengo Maestro di Capella del Domo di Milano, *La bataglia tagliana* (1549; repr. Peer, 1987). The first edition was published by Antonio Gardane of Venice in 1549, while the second was printed by Girolamo Scotto of Venice in 1552.

motets of 1539.⁶ *Victor io salve/Quis curare neget* makes explicit reference to the victory at Pavia and the capture of Francis I, while *Inclite Sfortiadum princeps* celebrates the restoration of the Sforza. Both feature cantus firmi modeled on the subject of Josquin's famous *Missa Hercules dux Ferrariae* in honor of Ercole I d'Este, perhaps in acknowledgement of Francesco II Sforza's Este heritage via his mother Beatrice. The third motet, *Vocem iocunditatis/Ecce Ducem nostrum*, which is attributed to one Gregor Peschin in München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 1536 and printed without attribution in Montanus and Neuber's massive *Thesaurus musicus* series of 1564,⁷ features a cantus firmus presented in canon at the fifth by the second tenor and second contratenor voices to the text "Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, will multiply as the cedar. Rejoice Italy." The canon is sounded against a dense imitative fabric in which the remaining six voices make metaphorical references to the restoration of Israel. Although the archival sources mention at least three civic commemorations of the victory and restoration held between 1529 and 1531, it is unclear whether any of these motets were performed at any of them. Along with *La bataglia tagliana*, however, they suggest a concerted effort to conserve the collective civic memory of the Sforza restoration.

Expansion of the Ducal Chapels

Aside from the corpus of music inspired by the victory at Pavia, Francesco II Sforza's primary legacy to musical culture in the duchy appears to have been the establishment of two ducal chapels that continued to serve the gubernatorial ceremonial of the occupying Hapsburgs after his death in 1535. The first of these was installed at Santa Maria della Scala, a church with ducal status that until 1776 was located on the site now occupied by the Teatro alla Scala. Founded in 1384 by Barnabò Visconti in honor of his spouse Beatrice della Scala, the institution boasted a large collegiate chapter originally charged with the daily performance and preservation of the Ambrosian office. In November 1530 Francesco II ordered the chapter's largely absent membership into residence and by 1532 had augmented the number of beneficiaries by eight, specifically for the purpose of providing a nucleus of singers for the choir. Membership

6 Scotto reprinted the volume in 1550. A modern edition of the collection is found in Adrian Willaert, *Opera Omnia 3: Motetti Vvorum*, ed. Hermann Zenck, (Corpus mensurabilis musicae) 3 (Roma, 1950).

7 Brusa, "Hermann Matthias Werrecoren," pp. 193 and 197, and Albert Dunning, *Die Staatsmotette, 1480–1555* (Utrecht, 1970), pp. 317–21, argue for an attribution to Werrecore.

in this group of choral beneficiaries (two mansionari, four chaplains, and two levites) was acquired only after the successful completion of a three-month probationary period in which the candidate was required to demonstrate the ability to sing well, sight-read proficiently, and perform Ambrosian chant from the chapter's books. At the end of this process he was admitted to office upon a positive vote from the chapter.⁸ The most famous 16th-century composer associated with Santa Maria della Scala was the prolific Orfeo Vecchi, who served as a mansionarius at Santa Maria della Scala from 1580 to 1582 and again from 1591 until his death in 1604.⁹ Vecchi's motets, masses, Magnificats, hymns, spiritual madrigals, and other Vespers music are preserved primarily in locally issued prints,¹⁰ despite the fact that Santa Maria della Scala regularly sent out liturgical books to a local scriptorium.¹¹ Even a corpus of chant books, however, has not survived.

Santa Maria della Scala's ducal status and relative vicinity to the Duomo and the Palazzo Reale in Milan no doubt influenced its elevation in stature, for Francesco II Sforza instituted similar changes at Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano, a ducal church formerly belonging to the Diocese of Novara that constitutes part of the rectangular complex of the Castello Sforzesco in Vigevano. Shortly after the church was reassigned to the newly formed Diocese of Vigevano and designated as its episcopal seat in 1530, Francesco II Sforza expanded the chapter's modest membership of a provost and seven canons to include four additional dignitaries, five canons, sixteen choristers and choral assistants (two mansionari, two deacons, two sacristans, two custodians, and eight juvenile

8 Christine Getz, "The Sforza restoration and the founding of the ducal chapels at Santa Maria della Scala in Milan and Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano," *Early Music History* 17 (1989), pp. 116–33.

9 Vecchi was holding the position of maestro di cappella even before he was reappointed as a mansionarius in 1591. See Marina Toffetti, "Nuovi documenti su Orfeo Vecchi," *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* 30/3–4 (1996), pp. 454–55, and Robert L. Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan, 1585–1650* (Oxford and New York, 2002), pp. 69–71.

10 For summaries of these, see Laura Mauri Vigevani, "Orfeo Vecchi, maestro di cappella di S. Maria della Scala," *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra* VII/4 (1986), pp. 347–69 and 399–448, and Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, pp. 70–71 and 199–202. Modern editions of Vecchi's collections include Orfeo Vecchi, *Missarum quatuor vocibus. Liber primus*, ed. Ottavio Beretta (Lucca, 1991), and Orfeo Vecchi, *La donna vestita di sole coronate di stelle, calcante la luna*, 3 vols, eds. Dolores Mather-Pike and Kent Carlson (Frankfurt am Main, 2006). In addition, a Magnificat, a Te Deum, and a number of the hymns from *the Hymni totius anni secundum consuetudinem S.R.E. quatuor vocibus* (Milano, 1600) were published separately in octavo by Calcografia Musica Sacra between 1896 and 1900.

11 See, for example, Getz, "The Sforza restoration," p. 158, Document 10.

clerics), a cantor, and an organist. Like Santa Maria della Scala, Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano was charged with performing a high mass and the canonical hours daily, but in contrast to Santa Maria della Scala, Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano performed in the Roman rite. Additionally, Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano appears to have had twice the number of choral beneficiaries at its disposal.¹² The documents indicate that Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano's first cantor Francesco Rosarino was a competent composer, but only a polyphonic hymn setting attributed to him in Modena, Biblioteca et Archivio Capitolare del Duomo, MS Mus. III has survived.¹³ Other 16th-century printed sources surviving in the Archivio Curia Vescovile in Vigevano show an emphasis on motets by Lombard composers, including Michele Varotto and Orfeo Vecchi, for various occasions throughout the liturgical year, as well as *ricercare*s to be played during the Offertory. According to the statutes, the motets were likely sung during Vespers or the Elevation and Communion of the Mass.¹⁴

Music at the 16th-Century Duomo

Although Santa Maria della Scala and Sant'Ambrogio in Vigevano provided for the day-to-day ducal and gubernatorial ceremonial, most major civic celebrations, even if they involved processions to or from other churches in the city, were celebrated at the Duomo of Milan. The royal entries of Duke Francesco II in 1530 and 1531, Emperor Charles V in 1533, Francesco's spouse Christina of Denmark in 1534, and many of the subsequent governors were marked by processional entries that culminated with sung Mass or Vespers at the Duomo. As most triumphal progressions were modeled on the ancient Roman triumphs documented by Appian and Plutarch, the Duomo services fulfilled the function formerly associated with the victory celebrations in the temple. The processional route to the Duomo, which wound from an appropriate city gate past designated civic monuments, was decorated with *apparati* featuring Roman symbols especially selected to communicate the visitor's station, his relationship to the city, and the city's subjection to him. The processors themselves included royal emissaries, court dignitaries and ranking ecclesiastics, as well as the court and civic trumpeters, the latter of which reportedly

12 Getz, "The Sforza restoration," pp. 109–16 and 129–33.

13 Getz, "The Sforza restoration," pp. 141–42.

14 Getz, "The Sforza restoration," pp. 141–46.

played fanfares along the route.¹⁵ Although the historical chronicles devoted to capturing these events enthusiastically describe the musical performances of the processing musicians, the Duomo choir, and the court musicians who performed at the banquets, jousts, and theatrical events, very little music that can be attached to the progressions has been recovered. Ernold Caussin's four-voice motet *Nomine si vastus*, which was published in Jacque Moderne's *Motetti del Fiore IV* of 1539, was likely sung at the 1538 entry of governor Alfonso d'Avalos, Marchese del Vasto. It describes D'Avalos as descending from the seed of Bellona and Mars, praises his military prowess, and acknowledges him as Caesar's trusted commander.¹⁶

The penitential processions of 1529, the annual Corpus Christi processions, the annual Triduane processions held on the three days following the Ascension, and the penitential processions during the plague of 1576 also originated at the Duomo.¹⁷ Two ceremonials from the Duomo dating to 1543 and 1562, moreover, list a number of Ambrosian feasts celebrated there with processions, many of which culminated in other churches in the vicinity where the choir performed Terce, Mass, or Vespers.¹⁸ Thus, on certain occasions the city itself was transformed into a literal soundscape for the Duomo choir. Although the choir varied in size between 1525 and 1585, the registers show that the Fabbrica of the Duomo typically retained at least four contraltos, four tenors, and four basses, as well as one or two adult sopranos and four to six boys.¹⁹ In addition, a number of beneficiaries selected from among the chapter ordinaries (the *maceconici* who instructed the choirboys, chaplains, and notaries) were assigned to the choir for Terce, Mass, and Vespers, presumably to support the singing of plainchant.²⁰

15 Christine Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience in Sixteenth-Century Milan* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 21–22, 39–40 and 134–49.

16 *Motetti del Fiore IV*, ed. Jacques Moderne (Lyons, 1539), 47–48ff. Full set of part books in München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

17 See Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, pp. 123–34, for further discussion of these.

18 Milano, Archivio Storico Diocesano (hereafter ASDM), Archivio spirituale x, Metropolitana IX-382 (Archivio spirituale x, Visite pastorali e documenti aggiunti 1562) and ASDM, Archivio spirituale x, Metropolitana LXXXII-456 (Visite pastorali e documenti aggiunti), fasc. 22.

19 Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, 90–97.

20 ASDM, Archivio spirituale x, Metropolitana XXXI-404 (Visite pastorali e documenti aggiunti), fasc. 5, no. 3.

Music at the 16th-Century Gubernatorial Court

The surviving documents suggest the musical forces at court to be far less stable. The official pay registers from the ducal and gubernatorial court show payments only to eight trumpeters. From 1537 they are divided into two court and six civic trumpeters, probably because the court trumpeters were entrusted with delivering missives not only within Lombardy, but also outside the borders of the duchy. The personnel in the trumpeters' corps remained relatively stable from one governorship to the next, fluctuating only when a player retired or took leave to serve abroad.²¹ The documentation of other musicians is admittedly fragmentary, but it can be argued that the number of them at court depended largely upon the relative level of interest demonstrated by the presiding official. In addition to the trumpeters, Francesco II Sforza evidently employed a few wind players and the organist Egidio Marliano.²² Of the governors sent to represent the Hapsburg court after Francesco II Sforza's death in 1535, Ferrante Gonzaga, who presided from 1546 to 1555, Consalvo-Fernando di Cordova, Duke of Sessa, who served as governor from 1558–1560 and again from 1563–1564, and his interim replacement Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos, Marchese di Pescara, present from 1560 to 1563, seem to have been the most ardent patrons of music. In addition to the singer-composer Hoste da Reggio, Ferrante employed a band of instrumental musicians led by one Ludovico Visconte, locally known as Moscatello, that included an internationally famous trombonist named Orfeo whom he loaned to Archduke Ferdinand of Austria along with one of the trumpeters in 1553.²³ Consalvo-Fernando di Cordova and Francesco Ferdinando d'Avalos appear to have attracted a number of string players to the court, finally tapping into the supply of Milanese and Cremonese violinists and violists who had previously been lured away by the French court.²⁴ They further introduced the composers Giaches de Wert and Fabrizio Dentice into court activities.²⁵

21 See Guglielmo Barblan, "La vita musicale in Milano nella prima metà del Cinquecento," *Storia di Milano*, 16 vols (Milano, 1961) 9: 876–79, and Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, pp. 159–66.

22 Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, pp. 161–63.

23 Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, pp. 169–72.

24 Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, p. 179.

25 See Iain Fenlon, *Giaches de Wert: Letters and Documents* (Abbeville, 1999), pp. 50, 81, and 87, and Fabritio Dentice, *Da Napoli a Parma: itinerari d'un musicista aristocratico. Opere vocali di Fabritio Dentice*, ed. Dinko Fabris (Milano, 1998), p. 43.

Music in the Milanese Print Market

Most of the composers documented in Milan between 1525 and 1585 served either as maestri at the Duomo or as musicians in the household of the Spanish governors, and their contributions can be traced primarily via the local Milanese printing houses and the Venetian print market. Motets and madrigals dominated the output, with masses, Magnificat settings, and lute intabulations interspersed. The first Milanese printer to attempt the publication of polyphonic music was Giovanni Antonio Castiglione. In 1535 Castiglione, the son of a local printer from whom he likely inherited the business, entered into a ten-year agreement with the bookseller Rainaldo d'Adda and the lutenist and imperial spy Pietro Paolo Borrono to print lute music. D'Adda was to advance the funds to cover the paper and printing costs, while Borrono was responsible for selecting the repertoire, but the two were to share equally in the profits after all printing expenses had been covered. The only extant result of this partnership, the *Intabolutura de leuto de diversi autori* of 1536, is a collection of lute intabulations by Alberto da Ripa, Giovanni Giacomo Albuzio, Marco Dall'Aquila, Francesco da Milano, and Borrono himself. Borrono, apparently wielding his skills as a lutenist as a cover for his covert activities, contributed a toccata and several suites consisting of a pavane and three saltarelli to the book.

Castiglione also entered into another ten-year agreement, this time with D'Adda, Borrono, and Werrecore to print vocal music. D'Adda again covered the expenses, but in this case Werrecore was to select and supply the content. D'Adda, Borrono, and Werrecore, however, were to share equally in the profits. The tangible results of this second collaboration remain unclear, since a collection of five-voice motets printed by Petrus Schaeffer of Strasburg in 1539 is the only extant publication of the period in which Werrecore is named as an editor.²⁶ It is possible that Castiglione initially had difficulty acquiring the necessary technology for printing polyphonic vocal music and the collaborators were forced to look elsewhere for a printer. In any case, Castiglione did issue at least two collections of five-voice motets: Vincenzo Ruffo's *Il primo libro de motetti a cinque voci* of 1542 and the *Mutetarum divinitatis liber primus* of 1543. The former contains 35 motets (some in two parts) by Vincenzo Ruffo,²⁷ while the latter features 23 motets, including an impressive nine by Dominique Phinot as well as three by Werrecore, collected largely from French and Flemish

26 Arnaldo Ganda, "Giovanni Antonio Castiglione e la stampa musicale a Milano," *La Bibliofilia* 100/2-3 (1998), pp. 302-305.

27 Vincenzo Ruffo, *Il primo libro de motetti a cinque voci* (Milano, 1542).

repertoire by the local paper vendor Bernardino Calusco.²⁸ Both collections are dedicated to Milanese governor Alfonso D'Avalos, but Ruffo's, in particular, seems destined for use at the gubernatorial court. It features motets for many of the temporal feasts and some sanctoral feasts celebrated with solemnity at Santa Maria della Scala, as well as two occasional motets dedicated to local figures. The first of the occasional motets, *Laudibus laudemus*, pays tribute to Melchior Saavedra, a military captain in the service of Charles V, while the latter, a cantus-firmus motet entitled *Uxor sicut tua vitis abundans*, may have been intended for the baptism of Giovanni Battista Visconti's son Ermes.²⁹ Whether Ruffo composed the motets of his first book while in Milan or compiled them from material already available from his tenure in Verona remains unclear. The documentary evidence, which describes him as a musician in the household of D'Avalos, confirms only that he was present during the year 1542,³⁰ and, further, indicates that by 27 October 1542 he had accepted a position as maestro di cappella at the Cathedral of Savona.³¹ While the motets from the *Mutetarum* may also have been used in the gubernatorial chapel, its content was largely drawn from the works of composers active outside Lombardy, those of Werrecore being the obvious exception. Of particular note among the three motets he contributed is the cantus-firmus motet *Beati omnes/Uxor tua sicut*, which was likely sung at the baptism of Alfonso D'Avalos's son Carlo, for whom Charles V stood as sponsor at a service in the Duomo during his nine-day visit to the duchy in 1541.³²

In 1544 Castiglione forged yet another agreement with Borrono, this time to print further lute intabulations. The result of this final collaboration was the *Intavolatura di lauto* of 1548 featuring the works of Borrono and Francesco da Milano. The archival evidence suggests that Borrono had contracted the volume with multiple printers outside the duchy, and, indeed, it was issued by Scotto of Venice the same year. Following this venture, Castiglione appears to have issued no additional lute music or polyphony; his last two music

²⁸ *Mutetarum divinitatis liber primus*, ed. Bernardino Clausco (Milano, 1543).

²⁹ The theory that *Uxor sicut tua vitis abundans* was composed for the baptism of Ermes Visconti was first advanced in Lewis Lockwood, "The Counter-Reformation and the Sacred Music of Vincenzo Ruffo" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1960), p. 295.

³⁰ Ruffo, *Il primo libro de motetti*, dedication and Milano, Archivio di Stato (hereafter ASM), *Studi p. a.* 97, 2–3ff.

³¹ Flavio Emilio Scogna, "La musica nel Duomo di Savona dal XVI al XVIII secolo," *Nuova rivista musicale italiana* xv (1981), pp. 261–262, and Flavio Emilio Scogna, *Vita musicale a Savona dal XVI al XVIII secolo* (Savona, 1982), pp. 27–28.

³² See Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, p. 51.

prints included an Ambrosian *Missale* (1548) and the *Compendiolo* of Pietro Aron (1550).³³

The void left by Castiglione in 1550 was quickly filled by Francesco and Simone Moscheni, two Bergamasque printers specializing in Greek, Latin, and Italian texts who had relocated at least part of their practice from Pavia to Milan in early 1554.³⁴ They apparently had a hand in at least two music prints—Simon Boyleau's *Madrigali a quattro voci* (1546) and Antonio Martorello's *Il primo libro di madrigali a cinque voci* (1547)—prior to arriving in Milan, so may have transferred the necessary equipment and personnel from Alessandria and Pavia. During the 12 years in which they operated partially from Milan, the Moscheni brothers issued a dozen collections of Latin sacred polyphony and Italian secular music primarily by local composers.³⁵ Although they produced several hymn and motet volumes, including Werrecore's monumental *Cantum quinque vocum quos motetta vocant . . . liber primus* of 1555/1559, their most substantial contribution was in the circulation of madrigal collections by the maestri and organists from the court, the Duomo, Sant'Ambrogio in Milan, and the newly established chapel at Santa Maria presso San Celso, including Hoste da Reggio (1554), Pietro Taglia (1555 and 1557), Simon Boyleau (1564), and Gioseppe Caimo (1564). These volumes, along with the three books of madrigals by Hoste da Reggio issued in Venice by Girolamo Scotto, defined the Milanese madrigal at mid-century, with its overwhelmingly declamatory homophony spiced by short bursts of imitation and chromatic inflections.³⁶

Werrecore's *Cantum quinque vocum*, printed by Moscheni in 1555 and reprinted in 1559, undoubtedly reflects the musical style cultivated at the Duomo of Milan during the twenty-seven years in which the composer served

33 Ganda, "Giovanni Antonio Castiglione," pp. 313–16.

34 Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, pp. 204–21.

35 For a full summary of the music prints issued by Francesco and Simone Moscheni, see Mariangela Donà, *La stampa musicale a Milano fino all'anno 1700* (Firenze, 1961), pp. 44–47. Additionally, the Moscheni's first musical venture is treated at length in Lucia Marchi, "Simon Boyleau: studio biografico ed edizione critica dei *Madrigali a quattro voci* (1546)" (Tesi di laurea, Università degli Studi di Pavia, 1995–1996).

36 Several of these volumes are available in modern editions. See Hoste da Reggio, *Primo libro de madrigali a quattro voci* (Venice, 1547), ed. Jessie Ann Owens, (Sixteenth Century Madrigal) 8 (New York and London, 1988); Hoste da Reggio *Il secondo libro delli madrigali a quattro voci* (Venice, 1554) ed. Jessie Ann Owens, (Sixteenth Century Madrigal) 9 (New York and London, 1988); Pietro Taglia, *Il primo libro de madrigali a quattro voci* (Milan, 1555), ed. Jessie Ann Owens, (Sixteenth Century Madrigal) 27 (New York and London, 1995); and Gioseppe Caimo, *Madrigali and canzoni for Four and Five Voices*, ed. Leta E. Miller, (Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance) 84 and 85 (Madison, 1990).

as maestro di cappella there. The 20 five-voice motets contained, several of which are multipartite, feature the pervasive imitation and alla breve signatures that also characterize many of the motets of Ruffo and Phinot. Several of them, moreover, including *Veni sancte spiritus*, *Tu solus*, *Proh dolor*, *Popule meus*, and *Ave maris stella*, are somewhat retrospective in their reference to texts, cantus-firmus techniques, canonic procedures, and mensural practice common to the works preserved in the Milan choir books. They were designed explicitly for use in the Duomo ceremonial and feature not only texts appropriate to a variety of temporal and sanctoral feasts celebrated there, but also a funeral motet for Alfonso D'Avalos (*Proh dolor*) and a cycle for the Adoration of the Cross, one of the most solemn annual occasions on the Milanese calendar.³⁷ Although they are similar in style to other Milanese motets of the era, however, the motets of Werrecore are far more compositionally sophisticated than the ones by Ruffo published some fifteen years earlier, as the latter are marred by occasional contrapuntal infelicities and a certain textural muddiness among the interior voices of the five-part texture.³⁸

The 1560s and 1570s

During the late 1560s and 1570s, many of the aforementioned composers continued to dominate the local scene. Between 1563 and 1572, for example, Ruffo returned to Milan as maestro di cappella at the Duomo, where he devoted himself to the composition of liturgical music featuring clarity of texture and text declamation. The Duomo's choral ordinances of 1572 indicate that the maestro di cappella was to be responsible for a polyphonic mass, a Magnificat, and the appropriate hymns each month, and the surviving fruits of Ruffo's labors in this regard are the *Missa quatuor concinate ad ritum concilii mediolani* of 1570 and the *Messe a cinque voci* of 1572. The masses of the former collection eschew cantus firmus structures and the use of polyphonic models in favor of coherent modal organization of the sort generally associated with Magnificat settings. Although the *Messe a cinque voci* do not appear to continue the modal theme, the masses of both collections are driven by careful attention to the rhythmic articulation of the declamation with the result that the overriding texture is

37 See Hermann Matthias Werrecore, *Cantum quinque vocum quos motetta vocant . . . liber primus* (1559), ed. Christine Getz, (Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance) 151 (Madison, 2008).

38 See Vincenzo Ruffo, *Il primo libro de motetti a cinque voci* (Milan, 1542), ed. Richard Sherr, (Sixteenth Century Motet) 19 (New York and London, 1988).

chordal, with the full simultaneities broken occasionally by paired imitation, reduced textures in alternatim, and quasi-imitative passages that quickly dissolve into homophony.³⁹ The contrapuntal infelicities of the sort that plague some of the motets of Ruffo's 1542 book are less evident in the masses of the 1570s, but the masses are admittedly somewhat texturally monotonous, relying as strongly as they do on the simultaneous style.

Between 1563 and 1568 Simon Boyleau was serving as maestro di cappella at Santa Maria presso San Celso, a pilgrimage church undergoing construction that had been accorded ducal status following the reported appearance of an apparition of the Virgin on its site in 1485. Boyleau's tenure at Santa Maria presso San Celso appears to mark the beginning of a period in which investments were being made not only in the structure of the edifice, but also in the music that adorned Mass and Vespers on first Sundays of the month and other designated feasts celebrated there. The surviving documents for the period between 1563 and 1586 suggest that funds were set aside to sustain a small complement of singers. In addition, construction of the choir continued apace and significant renovations to the organs were made. By 30 May 1593 when the deputies instituted their famous Saturday evening Salve service intended to rival every other Salve or Ave service in the city, and, in particular, the Ave service at the Duomo reportedly sung by the best eight singers in the city, Santa Maria presso San Celso was regularly employing an impressive roster of organists and singers.⁴⁰

Boyleau's *Modulationes in Magnificat ad omnes tropos*, published by Cesare Pozzo of Milan in 1566, features a five-voice Magnificat in each of the eight tones as well as formulae for singing the Magnificat verses in falsobordone. The collection is dedicated to Cardinal Archbishop Cardinal Borromeo, who arranged Boyleau's appointment at Santa Maria presso San Celso. It is tempting to point to the collection, along with Ruffo's mass books of 1570 and 1572, as the printed evidence of Borromeo's interest in promoting an austere musical style that prized text intelligibility and freedom from scaffolding devices over

39 A comprehensive study of the masses from 1570 and 1572 is found in Lewis Lockwood, *The Counter-Reformation and the Masses of Vincenzo Ruffo* (Venezia, 1967), pp. 181–213 and 216–21. Some are edited in Vincenzo Ruffo, *Seven Masses: Part II*, ed. Lewis Lockwood, (Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance) 33 (Madison, 1979).

40 See Getz, *Music in the Collective Experience*, pp. 233–35; Christine Getz, *Mary, Music, and Meditation: Sacred Conversations in Post-Tridentine Milan* (Bloomington, 2013), pp. 17–38; and Christine Getz, "Simon Boyleau and the Church of the 'Madonna of Miracles': Educating and Cultivating the Aristocratic Audience in Post-Tridentine Milan," *Journal of the Royal Music Association* 126 (2001), pp. 145–160.

musical innovation, but it is perhaps more valuable to consider it as peripheral to an initiative pursued by Borromeo that focused on the mass production of devotional books aimed at spiritualizing both the clergy and the general populace, among which the laude collections of 1576 and 1586 printed by Pacifico Ponzio played an important role in confraternal and public devotions such as those that emerged at Santa Maria presso San Celso.⁴¹

Although the Ponzio family was a designated Diocesan printer from approximately 1565 and Pacifico Ponzio held the title exclusively from 1570, the family did not limit itself to the publication of sacred books. Its musical output, consequently, introduced some new voices to the local landscape. In 1572, for example, Paolo Gottardo Ponzio printed the *Madrigali a cinque voci* of Nicola Vicentino, a well-known composer who had migrated from the court of Ferrara in 1565 to take up residence as second rector at the church of San Tommaso in terra amara. As Davide Daolmi has shown, the rectorship at San Tommaso was just one of several benefices Vicentino had amassed in Milan through the intervention of his employer Ippolito II D'Este, who had reclaimed possession of the archdiocese between 1555 and 1560. In addition to holding an appointment at San Tommaso until at least 1574, Vicentino, along with the aforementioned Caimo, may have been a member of the Facchini della Val di Blemio,⁴² a local literary academy documented in Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo's *Rabisch* of 1589 and noted for its elaborate entertainments.⁴³ Vicentino's *Madrigali* of 1572, however, is one of a just a few music books printed in Milan in the 1570s, for the emphasis was tilted towards the lucrative market for educational, devotional and liturgical books that fueled the reformative aims of Cardinal Archbishop Carlo Borromeo.

Expansion of the Milanese Printing Market

The market for educational and spiritual books, nevertheless, gave way to an explosion in the Milanese music printing industry that characterizes the years 1583–1630 and serves to define, along with the archival sources, our understanding of musical culture in the city during the early modern period.

41 Giancarlo Rostirolla, "Laudi e canti spirituali nelle edizioni della prima 'controriforma' milanese," in *Carlo Borromeo e l'opera della 'grande riforma'*, eds. Franco Buzzi and Danilo Zardin (Milano, 1997), pp. 159–76.

42 Davide Daolmi, *Don Nicola Vicentino: Arcimusico in Milano* (Lucca, 1999), pp. 4–47 and 93–94.

43 Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Rabisch*, ed. Dante Isella (Torino, 1993).

It was likely the potential market for educational and religious materials that attracted Michele Tini and his cousins Giovanni Pietro, Francesco, and Simone from Sabbio to Milan between 1563 and 1567, following in the footsteps of their uncle Antonio degli Antoni, who had set up shop in Milan in 1554.⁴⁴ Michele Tini, in particular, appears to have quickly distinguished himself as a printer in Milan, and when Carlo Borromeo, seeking both to expand the presses available to issue the decrees, proclamations, and religious materials that supported his spiritual program and to better shield his projects from gubernatorial censorship, established a seminary press in 1576 to complement the diocesan one entrusted to the Ponzio family, he chose Tini as his official seminary printer. The venture was short lived, however, for tensions between governor Don Antonio de Guzman y Zuniga and Borromeo and the economic difficulties associated with maintaining a press within its walls led the seminary to close its press in 1580.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the Tini family had purchased its own press in the Piazza dei Mercanti in 1575,⁴⁶ and when the demand for the educational and devotional books that had fueled the presses in the 1560s and 1570s declined, the Tini press shifted its attentions to more lucrative aspects of the market, including music printing. The music books issued by Francesco and Simone Tini, their heirs, and their collaborators Francesco Besozzi and Filippo Lomazzo, as well as those printed by their competitor Agostino Tradate, between 1583 and approximately 1630 collectively document the rich musical culture in the duchy during the era. They show that while sacred repertoire dominated, there was also a demand for madrigals and canzonette, and further indicate that a number of maestri, singers, and organists active in the city's institutions provided the repertoire.⁴⁷ A surviving inventory from the Tini shop dating from 1596–97, for example, points to the attention placed on local composers such as the Duomo organists Giuseppe Caimo and Cesare Borgo, Novara's maestro Michele Varotto, Vecchi from Santa Maria della Scala, and the Franciscan Valerio Bona, whose collections appear alongside those of Orlando di Lasso, Pierluigi da Palestrina, Andrea Gabrieli, and Giovanni Matteo Asola.⁴⁸

44 Marina Toffetti, "The Tini Family: Sixteenth-Century Music Printers in Milan," *Fontes Artis Musicae* 46/3–4 (1999), pp. 244–67.

45 Kevin Mark Stevens, "Printers, publishers, and booksellers in Counter-Reformation Milan: A documentary study," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992), pp. 174–215.

46 Toffetti, "The Tini Family," pp. 247–50 and 262.

47 See Donà, *La stampa musicale a Milano*, pp. 29–40 and 74–116 and Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, pp. 188–89.

48 Iain Fenlon, "Il foglio volante editoriale dei Tini, circa il 1596," *Rivista italiana di musicologia* 12/2 (1977), pp. 244–51.

Sacred Music and Aural Tourism in 17th-Century Milan

The printed output further suggests that the Duomo, Santa Maria presso San Celso and Santa Maria della Scala continued to dominate the musical scene in Milan during the 17th century, and the documentary evidence largely confirms this view. The choir of professional singers at the Duomo ranged between 17 and 25 across the period, with a particularly steep decline in the number of singers available immediately after the plague of 1630.⁴⁹ On the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin (8 September) and St Charles Borromeo (4 November), two of its most important celebrations of the year, five to fifteen additional singers and organists were typically borrowed from other churches in the city.⁵⁰ At Santa Maria presso San Celso, where the Saturday Salve service continued to play a central role and sung Mass and Vespers was extended to every Sunday rather than just the first Sunday of the month, the deputies experimented intermittently with enlarging the forces to between 9 and 15 between 1604 and 1614. However, the financial and disciplinary difficulties associated with maintaining such a large roster of singers led to the number being stabilized to between six and eight (and sometimes even fewer) thereafter.⁵¹ At Santa Maria della Scala, where eight benefices originally had been set aside for the singers responsible for ornamenting the ducal ceremonial, six to eight professional singers also became a standard.⁵² The size of the regularly salaried ensemble at each institution, of course, had ramifications for the repertoire contributed by its maestri and organists. In 1619 Vincenzo Pellegrini, who served as maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Milan from 1612 to 1630, published non-concerted Vespers settings for the liturgical year for two choirs as

49 Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, 28. On the cappella musicale of the Duomo from 1600 to 1630 see Marina Toffetti, "La cappella musicale del Duomo di Milano: considerazioni sullo status dei musicisti e sull'evoluzione dei loro salari dal 1600 al 1630," *Barocco padano 2: Atti del X Convegno internazionale sulla musica sacra nei secoli XVII–XVIII*, eds. Alberto Colzani, Andrea Luppi, and Maurizio Padoan (Como, 2002), pp. 441–556, and Marina Toffetti, "Nuovi documenti sulla cappella musicale del Duomo di Milano e sul suo repertorio nei primi trent'anni del Seicento," *Barocco padano 3: Atti del XI Convegno internazionale sulla musica sacra nei secoli XVII–XVIII*, eds. Alberto Colzani, Andrea Luppi, and Maurizio Padoan (Como, 2004), pp. 349–71.

50 See Toffetti, "La cappella musicale del Duomo," 528–40.

51 Giuseppe Riccucci, "L'attività della cappella musicale di S. Maria presso S. Celso e la condizione dei musicisti a Milano tra il XVI e il XVII secolo" *Intorno a Monteverdi*, eds. Maria Caracci Vela and Rodolfo Tibaldi (Lucca, 1999), pp. 298–303, and Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, pp. 54–55.

52 Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, pp. 68–75.

well as the *Sacra concertus* containing sacred concerti and motets for one to six voices. The output of the prolific Michel'Angelo Grancini, who served as organist and then maestro di cappella at the Duomo between 1630 and 1669, included a highly varied repertoire of sacred concerti, motets, psalm settings, Magnificats, and masses for forces ranging from one to eight voices, often with basso continuo. Meanwhile, Giovanni Paolo Cima, who served as the organist and sometime maestro at Santa Maria presso San Celso from 1595 until 1630, published his famous *Concerti ecclesiastici* for solo voices and continuo in 1610, but also produced four-voice motets (1599) and some five-voice Vespers, as well as numerous ricercares and canzonas. Likewise, Giulio Cesare Ardemanio, who served as the organist at Santa Maria della Scala for approximately four decades beginning around 1607, focused his attention on the sacred concerto and canzona.⁵³

Tini's publication in 1583–1584 of Orazio Colombani's *Armonia super Davidicos Vesperarum Psalmos maiorum solemnitatum*, a collection of Magnificat and Vespers settings for nine voices, is one of the earliest indications that the Franciscan church of San Francesco Grande was equally musical influential in 16th and 17th-century Milan. The church, which was adjacent to Sant'Ambrogio, housed approximately 200 tombs of local patrician families and was the principal site for the annual civic celebration of the feasts of Sts Nabor and Felix, St Francis, and the Immaculate Conception. The archival documentation that has been unearthed to date regarding specific musical activities there is sparse, and reveals only that San Francesco hosted the annual celebration of the appointment of the vicar of provisions and his twelve officers from 1556 and was the home for several confraternities. Yet following the release of Colombani's *Armonia* a steady stream of musical collections emanated from the maestri and organists resident there, including Colombani, Tommaso Graziani, Antonio Mortaro, Giovanni Ghizzolo, Francesco Bellazzi, and Giovanni Battista Cesati. As Robert Kendrick has noted, it is difficult to discern the size of the ensemble, although around 60 friars and novices were typically in residence and therefore available to participate in music-making. By the 1580s two organs were evidently in use and a document from 1669 suggests

53 Interestingly, modern editions are still lacking for much of the sacred vocal repertoire of Pellegrini and Grancini. A modern edition of Cima's 1610 sacred concerti is available in Giovanni Paolo Cima, *Concerti ecclesiastici*, eds. Rudolf Hofstötter and Ingomar Rainer (Wien, 1998) and some of Ardemanio's concerti and motets are discussed and transcribed in Marina Toffetti, *Gli Ardemanio e la musica in Santa Maria della Scala* (Lucca, 2004), pp. 199–286.

that as many as forty musicians performed at the church on some feasts.⁵⁴ Antonio Mortaro, who served as the organist at San Francesco Grande from 1598 to 1602, produced four volumes of sacred vocal repertoire during his tenure there that are perhaps instructive of the various aesthetic possibilities offered by San Francesco's studio and perhaps even the musicians hired by its confraternities. They include a volume of three-voice motets on texts largely drawn from the Franciscan breviary, a collection containing a mass, psalms, motets, and a Magnificat for three choirs (1599), a set of eight-voice Vespers psalms (1599), and a second collection of motets for four to six voices (1602).

Paolo Morigia's *Calendario volgare* of 1620 indicates that on any given day of the year a visitor could hear a feast celebrated with particular solemnity in one of Milan's churches,⁵⁵ and the printed evidence, in fact, indicates that many of the city's other institutions obtained access to modest musical forces for these celebrations. Most of them boasted, at the very least, an organist, and, if necessary, singers were borrowed from elsewhere. A register from the late 16th century kept by Battista Bagarotto, a rector at the church of Santa Maria Segreta, records remunerations received by him for singing in over twenty different churches in Milan, including Sant'Eustorgio, San Lorenzo, San Vittore, San Satiro, San Giorgio, and Santa Maira della Rosa, on repeated occasions across the years 1579 and 1580,⁵⁶ and documents in the Duomo archives similarly confirm the sharing of musicians among the Duomo and other institutions. Certain 17th-century singers, such as the bass Matteo Ferrari from Santa Maria presso San Celso, the tenor Giovanni Battista Lambrugo from Santa Maria della Scala, the bass Francesco Lucino and the soprano Giovanni Battista Corrado from the Duomo, not only sang frequently at the various institutions in the city, but also were vocally immortalized by having sacred concerti dedicated to them. The vocal talents of Lambrugo and Lucino were even the subject of dedicatory madrigals.⁵⁷ This phenomenon undoubtedly reflects

54 Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, pp. 64–66.

55 Paolo Morigia, *Calendario volgare* (Milano, 1620).

56 ASM, Fondo di Religione 1824 (Milano-Conventi-S. Maria Segreta-Somaschi-Culto), Libro della Cura di S. Nazaro Pietra Santa e Santa Maria Segreta dal 1570 al 1580.

57 Toffetti, "La cappella musicale del Duomo," pp. 502–507; Christine Getz, *Mary, Music, and Meditation*, pp. 76 and 172–75; and Marina Toffetti, "‘Lucino è un lampo, e la sua voce è un tuono’: Francesco Lucino cantore a Milano nel primo Seicento," *Rivista italiana di musicologia* 39/1 (2004), pp. 20–25 and 27–37.

the Milanese entry into what Andrew dell'Antonio has termed the aural collecting of sonic experiences.⁵⁸

Milan's convents were also important sites of aural tourism. Although music-making was part of daily life in numerous convents of varying social standing across the city, several institutions, including Santa Radegonda (Benedictine), Santa Maria Annunciata (Lateran Canonesses), Santa Margarita (Benedictine), and Santa Marta (Augustinian), became particularly well known for their singing of polyphony during the 17th century, and specific nuns are found among the dedicatees of both collections and individual concerti by such composers as Orfeo Vecchi, Giuseppe Gallo, Giovanni Paolo Cima and Andrea Cima.⁵⁹ The city's nuns contributed their own repertoire as well; Claudia Sessa, Claudia Rusca, and Chiara Margarita Cozzolani were all recognized composers in their own right. Cozzolani distinguished herself as one of the most progressive compositional voices in Milan following the plague of 1630. Four collections of her sacred polyphony were issued between 1640 and 1650, and these show a decided emphasis on the solo motet. As Robert Kendrick has noted, however, many of Cozzolani's motets feature a departure from earlier Lombard styles, instead taking their cue from composers in the Venetian orbit such as Alessandro Grandi and Giovanni Antonio Rigatti. Yet they would come to characterize the Lombard approach to the genre in the latter part of the 17th century, and are marked by more frequently alternating meters, faster and more flexible rhythms, recitation on repeated notes, chromatic inflections at cadences, more rapidly moving and carefully shaped bass lines, the use of ostinati, frequent refrains, virtuoso passages, dialogue structures, and frequent parallel thirds and sixths in duet textures. The texts of Cozzolani's motets, moreover, tend towards the extremely personal and meditative, giving particular emphasis to Eucharistic, Christological, and Marian themes. They unfold musically in structures that appear to derive from the sermonizing style taught by Emanuele Orchi (ca. 1600–1649) and Paolo Arese (1574–1644) in which successive phrases of a period increase in length and symmetrical syntactic periods of a section are balanced by asymmetrical ones.⁶⁰

58 Andrew dell'Antonio, *Listening as Spiritual Practice in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 2011), pp. 33–65.

59 Robert L. Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and their Music in Early Modern Milan* (Oxford and New York, 1996), pp. 27–57, 216–26, 244–47, and 251–54.

60 Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, pp. 268–365, and Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, *Motets*, ed. Robert Kendrick, (Recent Researches in the Music of the Baroque Era) 87 (Madison, 1998), pp. x–xiii.

The variety of Milanese institutions offering at least modest polyphony on its major feasts is perhaps best illustrated by Filippo Lomazzo's *Flores praestantissimorum viorum* of 1526, a volume containing selected sacred concerti, motets, Magnificats, a concerted four-voice mass, instrumental canzonas, and sonatas by the most prominent maestri and organists working in the duchy's churches. The Duomo, Santa Maria della Scala, the royal ducal chapel, and Santa Maria presso San Celso are represented, but so are other Milanese churches with ostensibly smaller programs such as Sant'Ambrogio, Santa Maria Segreta, Santa Maria della Rosa, San Sepolcro, and Santa Maria dei Servi, as well as cathedrals and collegiate churches from Novara, Tortona, and Monza.⁶¹ The collection is dedicated to the virtuoso Polish singer Constantine Czirenberg, and may memorialize a tour of Milan's churches to hear its polyphony undertaken by Prince Władisław during his visit of 1624.⁶² Such Polish fascination with Italian, and, in particular, Milanese polyphony was not novel. As Marina Toffetti has shown, Giulio Cesare Gabussi, who served as maestro di cappella at the Duomo of Milan from 1583 until 1611, left Milan with two other singers from the Duomo in 1601 for Warsaw, where he spent a year in the chapel of Sigismund III.⁶³ There he was one of several Italian musicians employed. Toffetti observes that upon Gabussi's return to Milan, his eight-voice writing was marked by an increased attention to the rhythmic articulation of the text, balanced textures, and a penchant for using two four-voice choirs in alternatim.⁶⁴ Whether or not he refined this style in Warsaw and brought it back to the Duomo in 1602 is unclear; his successor Pellegrini's double-choir writing makes use of similar techniques.

Although Gabussi returned to Milan after his Polish sojourn, many of the duchy's organists and maestri of the era were far more mobile, moving from one position to another in search of a better situation. The career of the organist Benedetto Binago is especially instructive in this regard. Binago began his career northeast of Milan in the parish of Vimercate, where between 1593 and 1597 he is recorded as organist in the registers of the Confraternity of the Rosary.

61 The content of the *Flores praestantissimorum viorum* is outlined in Getz, *Mary, Music, and Meditation*, pp. 179–82.

62 Katarzyna Grochowska, "From Milan to Gdańsk: The Story of a Dedication," *Polish Music Journal* 5/1 (Summer 2002), http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/5.1.02/grochowska.html, accessed 8 March 2013.

63 Marina Toffetti, "Da Milano a Varsavia: di nuovo su Giulio Cesare Gabussi e altre presenze italiane nella Polonia del primo Seicento," *La musica policorale in Italia e nell'Europa centro-orientale fra Cinque e Seicento*, eds. Aleksandra Patalas and Marina Toffetti (Venice, 2012), pp. 170–77.

64 Toffetti, "Da Milano a Varsavia," 182–94.

By 1598 Binago had left Vercate for a more prestigious position as organist in the collegiate church of Sant'Ambrogio in the nearby parish of Settala. Just four years later he is found at the basilica of San Gaudenzio in Novara, where he remained until 1611 when he accepted the position of maestro di cappella in the royal ducal chapel of Santa Maria della Scala in Milan. Binago's compositional production, which spanned some twenty years between 1598 and 1619, focused on motets in the spirit of Palestrina. As Daniele Torelli has shown, Binago's motets, which are largely for three to five voices and circulated in a number of important anthologies of the era, were adapted liturgically, texturally, and stylistically to the needs of the particular institutions he served, yet they apparently resonated a wide variety of North Italian institutions.⁶⁵

The Instrumental Canzona

Motets, masses, sacred concerti, Magnificats, psalm and hymn settings, and spiritual madrigals may have dominated the Milanese market during the late 16th and 17th centuries, but there is also evidence of a vibrant instrumental tradition in the city, particularly at the outset of the 17th century. Several pay records from the royal ducal chapel (housed at San Gottardo in Corte) reported by Davide Daolmi for the first decade of the 17th century show remunerations to as many as seventeen to nineteen musicians.⁶⁶ If, as Robert Kendrick suggests, the singers assigned to the royal ducal chapel numbered around six to eight during the first decades of the 17th century,⁶⁷ then the majority of the musicians in the royal ducal chapel were instrumentalists, and, in fact, other records suggest that at least a few of these were string players.⁶⁸ The presence of a number of well-trained gambists and violinists, along with the skill in improvising counterpoint inherent to organ playing, may have contributed to the popularity of the instrumental canzona, issued mostly in collections for four voices, among Milanese organists active in the region between 1590 and approximately 1620. Ottaviano Bariola's *Capricci, ovvero canzoni à quattro* (1594), published while the composer was serving as organist at Santa Maria presso

65 A detailed study of Binago's career and musical production is found in Daniele Torelli, *Benedetto Binago e il Mottetto a Milano tra Cinque e Seicento* (Lucca, 2004). The volume includes a large appendix containing transcriptions of a number of Binago's motets.

66 Davide Daolmi, *Le origini dell'opera a Milano (1598–1649)* (Brepols, 1998), pp. 276–81.

67 Kendrick, *The Sounds of Milan*, p. 75.

68 ASM, Dispacci Reali 46 (1603–1604), Busta 1603, f.80, f.81, and f.103, and Busta 1604, f.79; Dispacci Reali 47 (1605), s.n., 18 febbraio 1605.

San Celso, show a clear connection with the late 16th-century *ricercare*. They typically feature two to four sections, each of which is devoted to two or three subjects. Within this formal context, careful attention is afforded thematic unity and transformation, as well as contrapuntal devices such as hexachord mutation and inversion.⁶⁹ Later collections of the genre such as Giovanni Domenico Rognoni Taeggio's *Canzoni à 4. & 8. voci . . . liber primus* (1605) and Giovanni Antonio Cangiasi's *Scherzi forastieri per suonare a quattro voci* (1614) exhibit some of the characteristics associated with the mature Milanese incarnation of the genre, including strong forward motion maintained by motivic exchanges among the parts, division into texturally differentiated sections, varied recapitulation of material presented earlier, and intensive thematic and motivic transformation across the course of the piece.⁷⁰ Cangiasi's canzonas further show the influence of concurrently popular genres that relied on the basso continuo; the upper voices are often paired or exchange short motives over an independent bass that provides the harmonic foundation rather than participating in the thematic development.⁷¹ Each of the canzonas of Rognoni Taeggio, who was at the time organist at San Marco in Milan, is named for a local patron, a practice that appears to have been a popular means of positioning the genre and its composers socially.⁷² Cangiasi, a Franciscan who held a variety of positions in Milan and the surrounding area, chose the inhabitants of Castelnovo Scrivia, a Lombard town southwest of Milan, as the dedicatees of individual canzonas in the *Scherzi forastieri*.⁷³

Theatrical Entertainments and Opera

As in other Italian cities of the period, music also adorned the *balli*, jousts, firework displays, and theatrical entertainments held at the Milanese court during royal progressions, the canonization of saints, and annual carnival season.

69 See Ottavio Bariolla, *Capricci, ovvero canzoni à quattro . . . libro terzo* (Milan, 1594), ed. James Ladewig, (Italian Instrumental Music of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries) 12 (New York and London: 1995), pp. xi–xv.

70 Giovanni Domenico Rognoni Taeggio, *Canzoni à 4. & 8. Voci . . . liber primo* (Milan, 1605), ed. James Ladewig, (Italian Instrumental Music of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries) 16 (New York and London, 1992), pp. xiv–xv.

71 Giovanni Antonio Cangiasi, *Scherzi forastieri per suonare a quattro voci* (Milan, 1614), ed. Robert Judd, (Italian Instrumental Music of the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries) 24 (New York and London, 1991), pp. xiv–xv.

72 Rognoni Taeggio, *Canzoni à 4. & 8.*, ed. Ladewig, pp. xii–xiii.

73 Cangiasi, *Scherzi forastieri*, ed. Judd, pp. xiii–xiv.

Gian Battista Visconti's pastoral play *Arminia*, with intermedi culminating in a grand *ballo*, for example, was performed during the 1599 visit of Isabella and Alberto of Austria. Although the composer of the intermedi is not identified in any of the extant documentation, the first four intermedi were described as sung, while the last featured concerted singing with instruments. Its *gran ballo* was choreographed by none other than the celebrated dancing master Cesare Negri.⁷⁴ The birth of Prince Baldassare of Spain in 1629 similarly featured an allegorical play with "music and singing" presented in a scenic display designed by the architect Francesco Maria Richino and the painters Bartolomeo Genovesino and Panfilo Nuvolone in the Piazza del Duomo.⁷⁵ Presentations of sacred plays on biblical and hagiographical topics also abounded. Although a large number of these were produced by the Jesuit colleges, Franciscans and Dominicans also contributed to the repertoire, and, as Roberta Carpani has noted, the earliest surviving examples of Milanese theatrical music are the madrigals composed by Giulio Cesare Ardemanio for a pastorale "alluding to the arrival of San Carlo" performed by the Collegio di Santa Maria de' Nobili in 1628.⁷⁶

Sacred theater flourished in Milan during the first three decades of the 17th century precisely because a high degree of tension existed between the archiepiscopal offices and the gubernatorial court regarding the moral content and performing venues for theatrical works. The strong hold of ecclesiastical censorship was broken only when Governor Iván-Juan Fernández de Velasco adopted the Spanish concept, first attempted in Milan around 1601, of supporting public performances for the carnival of 1611 by reserving part of the proceeds for the Casa delle Vergini Spagnole, an orphanage for the daughters of fallen soldiers. This method of combining secular entertainment with charitable work gradually appeased the critics, and opened the way for public opera theater in the 1640s.⁷⁷

Many of the first operas performed in Milan during the 1640s appear to have been introduced by comic troupes such as Francesco Balbi's *Febiarmonici*, who staged *Giasone* (probably Cicognini's with music by Francesco Cavalli) in 1649

74 Daolmi, *Le origini dell'opera*, pp. 45–49.

75 Daolmi, *Le origini dell'opera*, pp. 189–92.

76 Roberta Carpani, "Percorsi della cultura biblica e modelli di santità nel teatro e nella spettacolarità lombarda nell'età di Federico Borromeo," *Studia Borromaica* 20 (2006), pp. 353–55 and 375–76. Also see Marina Toffetti, "Musiche per Carlo al tempo di Federico. La musica a più voci (1628) di Giulio Cesare Ardemanio per un'azione pastorale alludente alla venuta di san Carlo," *Studia Borromaica* 25 (2011), pp. 275–310.

77 Daolmi, *Le origini dell'opera*, pp. 70–74, 120–25, and 215–22.

and 1651,⁷⁸ or otherwise imported from elsewhere, such as Cavalli's *Orione*, which Davide Daolmi conjectures was premiered in Milan rather than Venice because actors of especially high quality could be secured and the new Regio Teatro was technologically superior to its Venetian counterparts.⁷⁹ By the 1670s, local connoisseurs were enthusiastically organizing productions for royal celebrations and carnival, going so far as to obtain the best singers available from abroad. During the carnival seasons of 1673–1674 and 1674–1675, for example, Vitaliano VI Borromeo brought Carlo Maggi's libretto *La Bianca di Castiglia* (with music by Francesco Rossi) from Isola Bella, where it had been produced twice in 1669, to the Regio Teatro in Milan.⁸⁰ During the carnival season of 1677–1678, moreover, he organized the entertainments and operas for two patrician weddings and carnival, securing professional singers for at least four different productions at the Regio Teatro from Parma, Mantua, Bologna, and Rome.⁸¹ Using his patrician status, Borromeo forged relationships with others across the peninsula who shared his passion for opera and his admiration of its performers, thereby facilitating the production of public opera and transforming its professional face in Milan. The vocal expression of the spiritual that had captured the Milanese imagination at the outset of the 17th century was beginning to loosen its grasp in favor of the *meraviglia* of sung theater.

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Territorial Identities

Simona Mori

The territory of Lombardy, with the map of collective subjects which populated it from the Visconti era to the Spanish, is at the centre of these pages. The perspective taken in this reconnaissance is that of identity, or rather of the conscious self-representation that the territorial actors adopted in their relations with others. Although identity is, by definition, an individual dimension, owing to the impossibility of considering the institutional subjects individually, they will be treated by category, with the aim of focusing on how the various collective personalities arose, their characteristic traits, their impact, and duration.¹

The Rural Communities

The villages of the countryside should be considered first, not only because a large part of the Lombard population lived in them, but also because of the high level of cohesion of which they were capable, thanks to the strength of neighbourhood ties. For some time, historians of the regional state have looked with interest at rural areas, at first concentrating on those notable for their population, economic activity or their autonomous status, and more recently extending their attention to a large number of small localities with less than 500 inhabitants.²

From the fifteenth century at least, the collectivities based on residence generally acted as conscious territorial subjects, and were recognized as such by the public powers. At that epoch, for the majority of individuals, belonging

1 A census of the territorial bodies is in *Le istituzioni storiche del territorio lombardo, XIV–XIX secolo*, 10 vols (Milano, 1999).

2 Giorgio Chittolini, *La formazione dello Stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado. Secoli XIV e XV* (Torino 1979); *Idem, Città, comunità e feudi negli stati dell'Italia centro-settentrionale (secoli XIV–XVI)* (Milano 1996), p. xvi; Massimo Della Misericordia, *Divenire comunità. Comuni rurali, poteri locali, identità sociali e territoriali in Valtellina e nella montagna lombarda nel tardo medioevo* (Milano 2006); Federico Del Tredici, *Comunità, nobili e gentiluomini nel contado di Milano del Quattrocento* (Milano 2013).

to a local community seemed to take precedence over ties of a personal nature, such as kinship or clientage, or of class, that in the fourteenth century sometimes still appeared to be decisive in the political organization of the population.³

In the best-studied areas, the commune mostly coincided with the settlement and this explains its capacity to aggregate and its solidarity in the face of the outside world. The commune was not always a simple unit, however. There could be smaller elements situated at some distance from the principal nucleus, such as districts (*contrade*), farmsteads, and cantons, whose cohesion could surpass that of the centre to which they were connected, especially if agricultural arrangements or a difficult terrain encouraged sparse settlement. Nevertheless, the commune tended to be consolidated over time to the detriment of the sub-communal formations, as a result of the institutional role conferred on it by the organization of the state. This prescriptive solidarity reinforced the more or less marked centripetal propensities that were expressed within the locality. Ultimately, therefore, it was the commune that became the minimal territorial *universitas*, provided that the minor nuclei did not cultivate their own independence to the point of obtaining detachment from it.

In what ways did the identity of the village become manifest, apart from through events and specific local characteristics that cannot be taken into account here? On this scale, living in similar conditions, facing the same daily challenges, and the same calamities, belonging to a single parish, as was the rule, meeting in the same assembly of 'neighbours', living under their own regulations, the communal statutes, and sharing assets and collective infrastructures had great significance, and, for all the inevitable frictions of coexistence, generated cohesion. This bond is witnessed by individual acts of intense symbolic value. The usual testamentary dispositions concerning alms clearly traced the outline of the collectivity to which testators felt they belonged: very often it coincided with the village community.⁴

From such a sturdy base, the collective subject elaborated a project of autonomy. A sub-communal nucleus could strive to obtain full institutional status or parochial dignity, with the associated right to elect the parish priest.

3 Andrea Gamberini, "La territorialità nel Basso medioevo: un problema chiuso?", in *Idem, Lo Stato visconteo. Linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milano 2005), pp. 203–230. On the primacy of the community, there is much in Della Misericordia, *Divenire comunità*, and Del Tredici, *Comunità, nobili*.

4 Massimo Della Misericordia, "I confini della solidarietà", in *Contado e città in dialogo. Comuni urbani e comunità rurali nella Lombardia medievale*, ed. Maria Luisa Chiappa Mauri (Milano 2003), pp. 410–489.

Communes already formed had recognized organs of government, mostly constituted by the assembly of heads of households, and statutes approved by the sovereign. Armed with these, they acted to safeguard themselves from strong subjects who could advance claims from the outside, but sometimes also from within. In the mid-fifteenth century, for example, not a few small communities showed impatience with the privileges the neighbouring city claimed to exercise over them, and worked to be 'separate', that is to gain immediate dependence on the prince.⁵

With the social and political changes of the sixteenth century the life of the communities became more complicated.⁶ Over the century, the rural population grew, making access to collective resources ever more difficult, with consequent tensions in the villages. Then, in the middle of the seventeenth century, the communities of the plain had to suffer the consequences of war, of the collapse of the urban economy and the fall of agricultural prices. The greater part of the centres were enfeoffed and had to manage not always amicable relations with the lord or with his administrators. The growth of fiscal pressure augmented communal indebtedness and sharpened the effects of the inequality of juridical situations in the same locality, above all that of civic and rustic property. True, in confronting the *cives* the villages successfully experimented with forms of co-ordination capable of conferring greater political weight on the countryside. But this was paid for in part by the growth in external control, with the consequent reduction in the spaces of autonomy and with the exacerbation of conflicts within the community between tough rural notables and the rest of the population.

The repercussions of these changes on local identity in Lombardy have not yet been fully evaluated. The hypothesis could be advanced, that they did not favour the ties of community solidarity, especially in the many small centres. Besides, there are documented cases of more conspicuous communities that knew how to respond effectively to the many challenges of the economic circumstances of the sixteenth century, of fiefholder and fisc, the billeting of troops and agricultural crises, even broadening the base of the communal government, without losing cohesion.

5 Giorgio Chittolini, "Models of government 'from below' in 15th-century Lombardy. The 'capitoli di dedizione' to Francesco Sforza, 147–1450", in *Empowering Interactions. Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300–1900*, eds Wim Blockmans and others (Farnham 2009), pp. 51–63.

6 Vittorio Beonio Brocchieri, "Piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo". *Famiglie e mestieri nel Ducato di Milano in età spagnola* (Milano 2003), pp. 45–62; Emanuele Colombo, *Giochi di luoghi. Il territorio lombardo nel Seicento* (Milano 2008).

Privileged Subjects in Rural Areas

Numerous territorial subjects, often with the encouragement of the princes, developed identities that set them firmly in opposition to the major centres and successfully pursued routes of emancipation from the powers of one sort or another that reached out from the cities. In some cases these were residual lay and ecclesiastical lordships that claimed immunity from the jurisdiction of the territorial prince, such as the Imperial fiefs. More often they were ducal fiefs or *terre separate* by virtue of privileges, or townships that, while remaining part of a *contado*, entered into competition with the city, exploiting their demographic weight, the importance of some economic activities or other strategic factors. These generally aspired to obtain privileges, perhaps to become a *terra separata* or even, in some instances, to make themselves into cities.⁷ Not infrequently these conditions were overlaid, giving rise of enfeoffed townships that figured in the *contado* as islands immune from urban powers.

The condition of separation was desired by numerous communities, who saw an advantage in immediate subjection to the prince.⁸ Originally this was granted by the Visconti to sanction established situations of autonomy: for example, to include in the territory of the state some old ecclesiastical lordships, such as Angera, Abbiategrasso or Varese;⁹ or to integrate distant centres, or those situated in inaccessible areas, or strongholds, such as Treviglio and Soncino, or entire Alpine valleys such as the Ossola or the Valle d'Intelvi. Subsequently, the institution of separation was utilized to give breathing room to expanding townships, Monza and Mortara, for example, or to communities about to be enfeoffed, such as Voghera, otherwise to reward loyal territorial nuclei, such as Chiari, or to grant direct control of strategic places, such as Pizzighettone.

Without continuing with this survey, it is possible to reflect here on the relation of the condition of separation to territorial identity. Since actual autonomy was usually of long-standing, the subjects concerned had already elaborated a clear sense of themselves, that the ducal sanction helped to strengthen. For the same reasons, the aspiration to separation could become for communities

7 Giorgio Chittolini, "‘Quasi città’. Borghi e terre in area lombarda nel tardo medioevo", in Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 85–104.

8 Giorgio Chittolini, "Le ‘terre separate’ nel Ducato di Milano in età sforzesca", in Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 61–83, which I am following on this point.

9 Andrea Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano nel Trecento. Aspetti politici e giurisdizionali", in *Contado e città in dialogo*, pp. 83–137 (87).

a stimulus to work on their self-image to justify their requests, even when, as frequently happened, they failed to achieve their objective.

In this kind of identity antiphrastic values prevailed, kept alive by the claims and continual disputes localities had to engage in to protect privileges which could be easily assailed by the cities or the dukes. This inclination for antithesis of the minor communities could in the long run produce an effect of cultural isolation, while separation, joined to opportune geographical conditions, sometimes generated islands of fiscal and jurisdictional immunities from which spread all sorts of illegal activities.¹⁰

Political stability and a greater propensity for direct territorial control, even if by means that were still exiguous, induced the Spanish monarchy to move away from this: in a list of 1667 only eight communities still figured as “*terre separate*”.¹¹ This matter has yet to be investigated, but these testimonies signal that the *contadi*, reformed in the way that will be described, gradually reabsorbed the areas of exemption instituted widely by the Visconti, returning to being the uncontested guarantors of tax revenues.

The most frequent destiny of the *terre separate* was, however, enfeoffment, of which the act of separation was often a warning. Few separated communities were not subjected to an alternative bond of obedience to that to the city. Aware of this, in the Spanish era some of them, such as the Valsassina or the Ossola, asked the ducal Camera for a guarantee of their liberty.¹² The reverse process is also documented, for Voghera, for example: that is to say, enfeoffed centres seeking to remain separated when the investiture expired. This confirms the close relationship, even if not the connection, between the two institutions.

In the course of its history, the State of Milan saw the birth of a large number of jurisdictional fiefs of various sizes, from village to *castello* (fortified village), township or city, to entire districts. The Visconti had recourse to fiefs from when, with Gian Galeazzo, the ducal dignity gave them the authority to institute them, and they reached their peak with Filippo Maria, who granted around 360.¹³ The practice continued at a steady rhythm in the Spanish era,

10 See for example Italo Cammarata, *Terre di mezzo. Cronache sforzesche della zona cuscinetto fra Milano e Genova. 1447–1530* (Voghera 2006), p. 92.

11 Alessandro Visconti, *La pubblica amministrazione nello Stato milanese durante il predominio straniero. 1541–1796* (Roma 1913), p. 84.

12 Alessandra Dattero, *La famiglia Manzoni e la Valsassina. Politica, economia e società nello Stato di Milano durante l'Antico Regime* (Milano 1997), p. 26.

13 Federica Cengarle, *Immagine di potere e prassi di governo. La politica feudale di Filippo Maria Visconti* (Roma 2006), p. 99.

such that an enquiry at the beginning of the eighteenth century, following the dismemberment of the western provinces in favour of Piedmont, counted 1641 enfeoffed communities, about three-quarters of the total number.¹⁴ It should be said that the juridical weight of the fief was inversely proportional to its diffusion: the powers and rights connected with it were progressively limited, so that the condition of separation of the fief from the rest of the territory was notably diminished from a fiscal and jurisdictional perspective.

The purpose of investiture changed significantly: while under the dukes it was used to control the territory and bind men and families, in the Spanish era it was motivated by financial reasons. In all cases it inflicted a *vulnus*, an injury, on the city, inasmuch as enfeoffment subtracted a portion of the *contado* in favour of a third party, with a consequent restriction on jurisdiction and fiscal rights. This has induced historians recently to see in Visconti feudal policy the wish to rearrange the territorial map to restrict civic powers.¹⁵

It should now be asked whether the fief as a territorial subject was the bearer of an identity, and of what nature. Without doubt it had a double subjectivity, that of the holder of the title to it, and that of the enfeoffed community. The relation between the two elements is important, and has been the object of various studies. In the fifteenth century there were frequent instances of strong solidarity between feudatary and community, in which the former took care of the *homines*, protecting them if need be from public powers as well, to receive in return military services, above all in places far from the city and characterized by high levels of violence.¹⁶ In similar contexts, in which a collective body was formed and brought together under a special juridical status the strength of kin and community, the fief could assume a quite strong identity profile.

In the modern era the documented situations became more varied.¹⁷ It might happen that the communities gathered around the feudatary to be relieved of the fearsome burden of lodging troops, or to confront rival centres. Not infrequently, however, disputes would arise and the community would lament vexations on the part of, not so much the feudatary, who was often absent, but

14 Cesare Magni, *Il tramonto del feudo lombardo* (Milano 1937), p. 185.

15 Cengarle, *Immagine di potere*, pp. 37 ff.

16 Giorgio Chittolini, "Feudatari e comunità rurali (secoli XV–XVII)", in Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 227–242; Cengarle, *Immagine di potere*, pp. 109ff.

17 Domenico Sella, *L'economia Lombarda durante la dominazione spagnola* (Bologna 1982), pp. 254ff.; Isabella Superti Furga, "Dal dominio straniero all'età napoleonica", in Dino Bonomi, Isabella Superti Furga, *Storia di Monza e della Brianza. Le vicende politiche dal dominio straniero all'Italia unita* (Milano 1979), pp. 11–284 (20); Dattero, *La famiglia Manzoni*, p. 49.

his vicar. If it was fortunate enough to have sufficient means, it could exercise the right of 'redemption' to ransom itself. Sometimes the feudal bond was not perceived as important, above all if, as was often the case, the juridical effects were limited. More often the community found itself torn between the ranks of the opponents, who usually included a large part of the notables of the commune, and the clientele of the feudatary, generally drawn from the poorer strata of the local population. In any case, in Spanish Lombardy the personal-ity of the fief faded, as did its importance in the political landscape.¹⁸

Among the more interesting actors of the rural world were the townships, communities of considerable substance that often boasted elements of distinction in their history, such as being fortified places traditionally recognized as *castra* or *oppida nobilia*.¹⁹ This was the case for Vigevano, Crema, Monza, Lecco, Soncino, Pizzighettone, Voghera, Martinengo, and Borgo San Donnino, already mentioned among the *terre separate*. Many of them, in fact, given their territorial importance, had already in the communal era broken away from the city to stand on their own.²⁰ In the early fourteenth century numerous townships became the seat of vicariates, that is, of officials who exercised functions of representation of the lord and of low justice.²¹ Others obtained various sorts of privileges from the Visconti. In any case, their particular condition, withdrawn at least in part from urban control, stimulated the economy, making them generally prosperous agricultural and manufacturing communities.

The society of the townships reflected this complexity and became ramified, enriched with merchants, professionals, well-to-do families who lived like nobles, and even titled families. This gave rise to typically urban institutions, among them municipal councils, broadly-based at first, later becoming exclusive in imitation of civic councils, fat communal patrimonies, imposing statutes, professional bodies, renowned religious and charitable institutions.²² The dense social web and opulence was reflected in the buildings, contributing to raise the profile of this kind of settlement, already distinguished by the prominence of their fortifications on the rural scene.

Only two of the twenty or so major Lombard townships achieved their ambition to become cities: Crema, which was recognized this standing by Venice in

18 Silvia Cuccia, *La Lombardia in età teresiana e Giuseppina* (Firenze 1977), p. 21.

19 Chittolini, "Quasi città", p. 85.

20 Paolo Grillo, "Istituzioni e società fra XII e XV secolo", in *Storia di Voghera*, I, *Dalla preistoria all'età viscontea*, eds Ettore Cau, Paolo Paoletti, Aldo A. Settia (Voghera 2003), pp. 165–224 (168).

21 Gamberini, "Il contado di Milano", p. 101.

22 On local government, see Del Tredici, *Comunità*, pp. 209–216.

1450 and was eventually elevated to a bishopric in 1580, and Vigevano, chosen as ducal residence by the Visconti first and gratified by an episcopal seat in 1530.²³ Monza, a centre of solid prestige, was not successful, due to the interference of Milan, in whose *contado* it lay. A kind of retaliation for having dared to compete with the capital, boasting the custody of the iron crown, preserved in the main church, and the privilege of the Roman-patriarchal liturgy within the Ambrosian diocese.²⁴

As this last example witnesses, emulation of urban ways was the distinctive identifying trait of the larger townships, beyond the results that this continuous effort was destined to produce in terms of status. By contrast, the numerous others that studded the state of Milan were bent on setting themselves apart from the simple communities of the countryside, besides defending their autonomy from the city.²⁵ At the end of the Sforza era, distancing themselves from both the city and the *contado* hindered these centres from assuming the leadership of their districts, in place of the noble families that had played that role so far.

This matter requires further research, but studies of the period from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century give the impression that with the territorial restructuring that took place after the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis the townships which were not completely separate succeeded in finding a more politically effective position in their respective territorial ambits.²⁶

Cities

The most conspicuous elements of the Lombard landscape were the cities, communities of residence that were not only bigger and more populous, but also 'ontologically' different in the eyes of the legal culture of the early

23 *Metamorfosi di un borgo: Vigevano in età visconteo-sforzesca*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini (Milano 1992); Giuliana Albini, "Da *castrum* a città: Crema fra il XII e il XIV secolo", *Società e storia* 42 (1988), pp. 819–854.

24 Giovanni Barni, "Dall'età comunale all'età sforzesca", in *Storia di Monza e della Brianza. Le vicende politiche dalla preistoria all'età sforzesca*, ed. Alfredo Bosio, Giulio Vismara (Milano 1973), pp. 187–373.

25 Del Tredici, *Comunità*, p. 225; Luca Zenobi, "Nascita di un territorio. La vicenda del Monte di Brianza fra Tre e Quattrocento", *Quaderni storici* 2 (2013): I thank the author for letting me see this text before its publication.

26 Sella, *Leconomia lombarda*, pp. 181–226; Beonio Brocchieri, «Piazza universale», pp. 47ff.; in synthesis, Giorgio Chittolini, "L'affermazione di contadi e territori", in *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 211–226 (215).

modern era.²⁷ For them, identity was less an immediate and natural feeling, and more a conquest to administer, a work to guard, a product refined over centuries. As the spatial scale increased, the sense of belonging became less exclusive, more subject to destabilizing factors, but could derive benefit from, besides dimensions, demographic potential, social complexity, more substantial economic and cultural resources, visibility from outside, political weight, persistence and memory.

The State of Milan between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries included around fifteen cities for periods of more than twenty years, with a more solid nucleus constituted by Milan, Pavia, Cremona, Lodi, Como, Novara, Alessandria and Tortona, and a more volatile corona, encompassing Parma and Piacenza, as well as Bergamo, Brescia, Vercelli and Vigevano, a township on its way to achieving the dignity of a city, and finally Reggio.

Their *honor civitatis* derived from the presence of an episcopal seat, and this was the primary element distinguishing them from all the other categories of territorial subjects, a motive for community pride and a factor of identity, that the rituals celebrated periodically in the cathedral and in the streets could revitalize if need be.²⁸ The episcopal see, even if it was not always at one with the civic government, for centuries conferred on the city a central role in the diocesan space and a consequent disposition to the political direction, up to real dominion, of the *contado*.

This was the second peculiar trait of the urban condition: the projection of local power beyond the walls, in a space that it was felt should coincide with the area of the diocese, the *comitatus*, which the communes between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries had set about subjecting to fiscal and jurisdictional control. The success of this operation was always partial and in many cases the *contado* suffered drastic amputations at the end of the Middle Ages.²⁹ Nevertheless, throughout the period being dealt with here, urban subjects forcefully pretended to the inclusion in their own bounds of numerous other communities, putting themselves forward as supralocal actors called upon to

27 Diego Quagliani, “‘Civitas’: appunti per una riflessione sull’idea di città nel pensiero politico dei giuristi medievali”, in *Le ideologie della città euopea dall’Umanesimo al Romanticismo*, ed. Vittorio Conti (Firenze 1993), pp. 59–76.

28 Giorgio Chittolini, “Civic religion and the countryside in Late Medieval Italy”, in *City and the Countryside in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, eds Trevor Dean, Chris Wickham (London 1990), pp. 69–80.

29 Gian Maria Varanini, “L’organizzazione del distretto cittadino nell’Italia padana dei secoli XIII–XIV (Marca Trevigiana, Lombardia, Emilia)”, in *L’organizzazione del territorio in Italia e Germania: secoli XIII–XIV*, eds Giorgio Chittolini, Dietmar Willoweit (Bologna 1994), pp. 133–233; Gamberini, “Il contado di Milano”, and *Idem*, *Oltre le città*, pp. 53–81 (77).

identify culturally, represent politically and govern not only the urban settlement but also a vast portion of the surrounding territory.

Inserted into the regional state by virtue of pacts of surrender made with the *signore*, the cities obtained from them at least partial recognition of their superiority over the non-urban communities of the district and even over those which enjoyed separate jurisdiction, such as the fiefs. In this way a *privilegium civilitatis* came to be constituted, which incorporated a series of juridical institutions intended to assure high jurisdiction within the *contado* for the provincial ducal official, who was usually well-established in the city, and to shield the *cives* from competing jurisdictional powers.³⁰

Another element of identity, although not an exclusive one, were the statutes, local ordinances that in the urban version contained norms of a constitutional and administrative nature, and of civil, penal and procedural law, gathered in rare manuscript compilations that in the course of the modern era were printed in various editions. Each city recognized itself in its own statutes and, inasmuch as these in large part followed widespread models, was jealous of original points and sometimes trivial details.³¹ Insertion in the regional state brought the integration of these ordinances into a wider system of juridical sources, mostly ducal decrees. So that they would be adapted to the new constitutional settlement, the statutes themselves were reformed repeatedly, and their legal force made dependent on the approval of the prince. Some of their prescriptions were abrogated by others from a higher authority or simply fell into desuetude. On the whole, however, they marked out a rather extensive space of autonomy for the urban communes, which lasted until the era of codifications, protected by some important regulations, among them the obligation on the local ducal magistrate to apply local law and to preface judgement with the *consilium sapientis* given by a jurisconsult of the civic college.³² As for the relationship to the *contado*, the statutes continued to sanction the asymmetry even after they had been reformed.³³ The urban oligarchies who concentrated local power from the second half of the sixteenth century wanted to place themselves under the protection of these texts, adding to them the lists

30 Magni, *Il tramonto del feudo lombardo*, pp. 157, 161; Chittolini, *La formazione dello Stato regionale*, p. 70; a re-reading in Cengarle, *Immagine di potere*, pp. 100ff.

31 Claudia Storti Storchi, *Scritti sugli statuti lombardi* (Milano 2007).

32 Gian Paolo Massetto, *Un magistrato e una città nella Lombardia spagnola. Giulio Claro pretore a Cremona* (Milano 1985).

33 Giorgio Chittolini, "Statuti e autonomie urbane. Introduzione", in *Statuti e città in Italia e Germania tra medioevo ed Età moderna*, eds Giorgio Chittolini, Dietmar Willoweit (Bologna 1991), pp. 7–45.

of permanent city councillors to buttress the legitimacy of the closure of access to positions in civic government, which had not been foreseen by the early juridical outlines.³⁴ In sum, it is not surprising that cities continued to dedicate much attention to their ordinances, above all when there were changes of the highest power, and that they guarded them as important civic symbols, even if dated and altered in several aspects.³⁵

Lombard cities could make use of numerous other features to give substance to their own identity, that can only be mentioned here: glorious, if redundant, institutions of local government, authoritative resident ducal magistrates, important *universitates*, rich religious and charitable bodies, powerful confraternities.³⁶ The *dignitas* with which civic councils everywhere vested themselves, even if they were troubled by absenteeism, comes to mind, or the insistence with which Pavia and Cremona from the sixteenth century onwards boasted of the fact that only their *podestà* had to be a magistrate of the highest rank, or the importance that the *studium* of Pavia, its lawyers and its learning gave to the life of the city and the privileges that the citizens derived from it; or the power of the merchant corporation of Milan, or the stature of the confraternity of S. Maria Maggiore at Bergamo, or the fame of many civic hospitals.³⁷

Prominent material aspects stimulated the elaboration of significant self-representations, from the *forma urbis* itself, the walls, the notable buildings,

34 Franca Leverotti, "Leggi del principe, leggi della città nel ducato visconteo-sforzesco", in *Signori, regimi signorili*, pp. 143–188 (167); Adriano Cavanna, "Tramonto e fine degli statuti lombardi", in *Diritto comune e diritti locali nella storia dell'Europa* (Milano 1980), pp. 307–328.

35 Chittolini, "Statuti e autonomie urbane", p. 24; Andrea Gamberini, "La forza della comunità. Statuti e decreti a Reggio in età viscontea", in *Signori, regimi signorili e statuti nel tardo Medioevo*, eds Rolando Dondarini, Gian Maria Varanini, Maria Venticelli (Bologna 2003), pp. 110–122.

36 A. Zannini, "L'identità urbana in Toscana. Fine di una ricerca, inizio di una riflessione", in *Società e storia*, 89 (2000), pp. 575–598; *Aspetti e componenti dell'identità urbana in Italia e Germania. Secoli XIV–XVI*, eds Giorgio Chittolini, Peter Johanek (Bologna-Berlin 2003); Andrea Gamberini, *Oltre le città. Assetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo medioevo* (Roma 2009), pp. 83–105 (104).

37 Simona Mori, "I governi delle città italiane fra antico regime e unità nazionale: percorsi storiografici. Prima parte", in *Storia e società*, 95 (2002), pp. 91–140; Francesco Somaini, "Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali dello Stato visconteo-sforzesco", in *Storia d'Italia*, ed. Giuseppe Galasso, VI: Giancarlo Andenna, Renato Bordone, Francesco Somaini, Massimo Vallerani, *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: la Lombardia* (Torino 1998), pp. 681–825 (739); Nadia Covini, *La bilancia dritta: pratiche di governo, leggi e ordinamenti nel ducato sforzesco* (Milano 2007); Bortolo Belotti, *Storia di Bergamo e dei Bergamaschi* (Bergamo 1959), II, p. 143.

civic, religious or private, to the particular features, such as water courses, bridges, or high ground.³⁸ Perhaps to be taken less for granted was the relationship of the *civitas* with the strongholds present within it, since citadels, regarded as symbols of an external power, were sometimes razed to the ground, as happened on the death of Filippo Maria Visconti to the castle of Porta Giovia in Milan or to the fortress of Como.³⁹

Every city cultivated elements of distinction that rendered it unique, beginning with the cult of the patron saint and specific religious rituals, whose weakness was the harbinger of a decline in local identity.⁴⁰ All types of primacy augmented a community's sense of self and sense of its own honour. Again, take Pavia, which elaborated its own image around its past as the capital of the Lombards, updated by the monumental city planning of Galeazzo II Visconti, and that finally had the satisfaction of seeing itself elevated first into a county, then a principate.⁴¹

Civic identity reverberated through many media and kinds of communication, among them precious editions of statutes, *laudes civitatum* or *historiae urbis*, biographies of illustrious citizens, prosopographies of officials and councillors, views, architectural works and monuments, festivals and processions.⁴² This was the motor, but also the aim of the commune's actions: the acts of the institutions of local government were shaped by urban identity and at the same time asserted it to the citizens and the outside world.

After this brief account, it is well to bear in mind that institutional subjecthood and civic identity were not given facts, static conditions, acquired once and for all; that, in other words, the urban community did not always act as one, activating the potential identity that has been illustrated. On the contrary, various sorts of fragility could be displayed, blurring the signs of collective consciousness. Economic depression, social rifts and political polarizations could cause 'parties' to prevail over the *universitas* or favour the entry of the community into the gravitational field of external powers who would reconfigure

38 Compare the description of Antonio Campi, *Cremona fedelissima*, 1583, on which see Giovanni Muto, "La città, lo stato, l'impero", in *Storia di Cremona. L'età degli Asburgo di Spagna (1535-1707)*, ed. Giorgio Politi (Azzano S. Paolo-Bergamo 2006), p. 40.

39 Giuseppe Rovelli, *Storia di Como* (1803), ed. Meroni (Como 1992), part III, vol. I, p. 1 and 210; Francesco Cognasso, *Storia di Novara* (Novara 1992), p. 405.

40 Gamberini, *Oltre le città*, p. 91.

41 Piero Majocchi, *Pavia città regia. Storia e memoria di una capitale altomedievale* (Roma 2008), pp. 117ff.; similarly Cremona, the "most faithful" of the monarchy (Muto, "La città, lo stato", p. 55).

42 Elisa Occhipinti, "Immagini di città. Le 'laudes civitatum' e le rappresentazioni dei centri urbani nell'Italia centro-settentrionale", in *Società e storia*, 55 (1991), pp. 23-52.

its inner relationships. Throughout the period this instability was intrinsic to the complex, composite structure of civic bodies. In fact, around not a few institutional actors an alternative subjectivity, of a corporate nature in its turn, could coagulate: the bishop, with his jurisdiction and his property, the cathedral chapter and aristocratic families, the *studium*, the economic *universitates*, the parishes and neighbourhoods.

Historians have recently called attention to these deficiencies, as well as to the variety and vitality of territorial subjects; the classic thesis of civic primacy has been carefully tested, and been put into a somewhat different perspective for the later medieval epoch.⁴³ An hypothesis thus takes shape, of a chronology marked by an important discontinuity between the communal and the ducal experience, which the urbancentric interpretation underestimated.

Given that the subjection of the *contado* by the city-states never reached completion, and that the crisis of the communes in the thirteenth century had lengthy repercussions on the efficacy of urban action, in the fourteenth century the *contado* crumbled still more due to the emergence of competing subjects, feudal families, territorial factions, townships and *terre separate*. With the Visconti regional *signoria* in place, the cities not only found themselves downgraded from sovereigns to subjects, even if under the form of pacts, but saw themselves deprived of important quotas of jurisdiction in favour, as has been said, of a territorial pluralism on which the central authority relied to balance the arrangements and increase its own chances of control.⁴⁴

Not only in this phase did urban centres suffer the competition of actors rooted in the rural world, but they saw the weakening of internal collective ties and the dimming of the citizens' perception of a common good to which everyone's actions should be directed. Political behaviour in numerous urban contexts seems to have been oriented by other identities, among which those springing from aristocratic families and the factions in which they were organized had the greatest impact. If civic sense collapsed at Parma, Reggio, Alessandria, Piacenza and Brescia, everywhere parties and factions got the

43 The tradition goes from Carlo Cattaneo, *Notizie naturali e civili su la Lombardia* (Milano 1844) to Giovanni Tabacco, *Egemonie sociali e strutture del potere nel Medioevo italiano* (Torino 1974); the interpretative model has been 'falsified' by Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale*, and riconfirmed in various later works, up to *Idem*, *Le città italiane del centro e del nord: un'identità territoriale e 'statale'* (secoli XV–XVI), forthcoming (that I have seen by courtesy of the author). Along the same lines, Somaini, *Processi costitutivi*. A concise discussion of the urban paradigm is in Gamberini, *Oltre le città*. Del Tredici, *Lombardy under the Visconti and the Sforza* rehearses the debate.

44 Gamberini, *Oltre le città*, p. 105.

upper hand.⁴⁵ There could be armed conflict, or an agreed division of local offices, government attributions and spaces, which often received an institutional sanction, as in Milan, Cremona, Alessandria, Como and Bergamo.

Since the parties sought supralocal co-ordination and tended to assume a trans-city, if not trans-regional, profile, the city ended up under the direction of a multiplicity of agents.⁴⁶ This loss of self-determination did not necessarily translate into a decline of local government, which sometimes benefited from party discipline, as from the propensity of the factions to integrate city and countryside, attenuating their antagonism. As for the health of civic identity, a synergy with factional identity seems to have been realized only where the factions became 'territorialized', taking stable possession of an entire urban ambit. In such cases, which were in the minority, the loyalty of a part operated as a unifying, descriptive element, one that was even distinctive to the city, in time reinforcing its self-representation.⁴⁷

Sporadically in the era of the Visconti and Sforza there arose in popular circles positions opposed to party divisions and in favour of a return to civic holism. Vertical social formations, produced by the nexus of kinship groups and clientele, factions were bearers of an hierarchical model of the organization of local society, that not all the components of society accepted willingly. This sentiment might be stimulated by the preaching of Observant friars, as happened at Como in the early fifteenth century. There, for some years, under the protection of Duke Filippo Maria, there flourished a Holy Union, itself a true corporation, a sort of sworn association of citizens pledged to stand together, to which the urban government was assigned for some time, to the exclusion of partisans of whatever allegiance.⁴⁸

Moreover, up until the Italian Wars, to draw attention back to chronology, factional allegiances were reinvigorated by every fresh political crisis and in general appeared more lively than civic ones. An exception to this was the experience of the Ambrosian Republic in the mid-fifteenth century, when, in the wake of the Milanese example, faced by the dissolution of the authority of

45 Marco Gentile, *Terra e poteri: Parma e il Parmense nel ducato visconteo all'inizio del Quattrocento* (Milano 2001); Andrea Gamberini, *La città assediata: poteri e identità politiche a Reggio in età viscontea* (Roma 2003); Letizia Arcangeli, "Aggregazioni fazionarie e identità cittadina nello Stato di Milano (fine xv–inizio xvi secolo)", in *Eadem, Gentiluomini di Lombardia: ricerche sull'aristocrazia padana nel Rinascimento* (Milano 2003), pp. 365–419, from which the following details are taken, unless otherwise specified.

46 Gentile, *Terra e poteri*, pp. 151–156.

47 Majocchi, *Pavia città regia*, pp. 117ff.

48 Rovelli, *Storia di Como*.

the state, cities recovered margins of manoeuvre as the subjects with the greatest legitimacy to occupy the power vacuum.

Signs of change were registered again in the early years of the sixteenth century, but remained circumscribed. The more robust cities, Milan, Pavia and Cremona, appeared to revive, with significant investments in embellishing them, while other centres, in particular Lodi, Alessandria, Como, Tortona and Piacenza, appeared shabby and almost forgetful of themselves to outside observers. For Parma and Piacenza the passage to papal government brought about a reversal of this tendency, for relying on the *universitas civium* was central to the strategy of the Medici pontificates.⁴⁹ Although the political instability of the period did not permit the consolidation of this approach, the experience prefigured a model of the organization of power on a territorial basis that would inform the settlement of Lombardy once the long chapter of the Italian Wars was finished.

After Cateau-Cambrésis the *pax hispanica* permitted a greater degree of integration of the civic governing elites in the northern and central areas of Italy, giving cohesion to urban structures.⁵⁰ Once again, the choices of the central authority were not unconnected with this, favouring a reconfiguration of civic society that was still hierarchical, but based on class. The promotion of state sovereignty at this point seemed to call for the disarmament and pacification of the great families, who had to content themselves with living as nobles in the city by the side of the higher echelons of the urban elite or withdrawing in good order to their fiefs. Installing regimes of privilege, mostly with statutory sanction, the Habsburgs encouraged the channelling of the energies of new civic oligarchies into the exercise of local offices, or even royal ones, to superior legal positions, or at least to the administration of possessions that, assisted by the rise of agricultural prices, were being extended in the *contado*, and finally to the control, preferably legal, of the rural communities.

Studies of the civic patriciates in the modern era, after a brilliant period that included work on Lombardy, have marked time for a while and only recently shown significant signs of revival, if no radical innovations.⁵¹ The 'patrician

49 Letizia Arcangeli, "Sul linguaggio della politica nell'Italia del primo Cinquecento", in *eadem, Gentiluomini*, pp. 331–364 (352).

50 For this, see Marcello Verga, "Istituzioni politiche", in *Storia degli antichi stati italiani*, eds Gaetano Greco, Mario Rosa (Roma-Bari 1996). On the exhaustion of the factions around 1535, Marco Gentile, "Factions and parties: problems and perspectives", in *The Italian Renaissance State*, pp. 304–322 (321).

51 On this rich chapter of historiography, see Mori, *I governi delle città italiane*. For the Lombard nobility, see Federico Del Tredici in this book. An ample recent contribution

system', one of the two Italian versions of the state based on social rank, replaced structuring by factions by the mid-sixteenth century. With the caution imposed by recourse to a literature that is now dated, one might advance the hypothesis that this happened because the new social organization was more functional to the 'verticalization' of the political and constitutional order pursued by the Spanish monarchy after Cateau-Cambrésis, as well as to the growth of fiscal pressure that took place everywhere by that time.

Nevertheless, the same patrician system favoured the growth of civic identity, even if in different terms from those of the Middle Ages. The self-representation of Lombard cities between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries tempered the communal ideal of autonomy by full recognition of the condition of subjection to the prince; from the communal experience they took and emphasized the culture of urban supremacy over the rural world, in general terms and not only under the juridical and fiscal profile. On the plane of rhetoric there was a passion for genealogy and a revival of the tradition of the classical *civitas* as updated by humanism, with a care to exalt the moral values of urbanity rather than the political values of democratic republicanism, and a preference for the reassuring mixed constitution.⁵² In comparison to the Visconti city, the 'Spanish' city had much less internal conflict, and was therefore more stable, but paid for this advantage with the compression of the space allowed to the artisan and mercantile elites, rendered compliant by the growing difficulties that their activities were experiencing.⁵³ The determination of the common good, a value brought fully up to date, was now reserved to a restricted and self-perpetuating group of *decuriones*, motivated by a noble ideology with little of republicanism about it, modelled on themes of honour, of the land, of paternal guidance of the lower orders, of deference to the Tridentine church.

To be clear, the sixteenth-century redemption of civic identity certainly did not mean that institutional pluralism was left behind. In this epoch, too, the central power preferred not to rely solely on the cities as nodes of the network by which they wanted to bridle the territory. Indeed, pressing fiscal reasons suggested giving breathing-room to the rural world, systematically making

is Chiara Porqueddu, *Il patriziato pavese in età spagnola. Ruoli familiari, stile di vita, economia* (Milano 2012).

52 Paolo Pissavino, "Per un'immagine sistemica del Milanese spagnolo. Lo stato di Milano come arena di potere", in *Lombardia borromaica, Lombardia spagnola. 1554-1659*, eds Paolo Pissavino, Gianvittorio Signorotto (Roma 1995), pp. 163-231 (179). In general, see Mario Rosa, "La cultura politica", in *Storia degli antichi stati*, pp. 58-116 (64-66).

53 Giorgio Politi, *Aristocrazia e potere politico nella Cremona di Filippo II* (Milano 1976).

institutions of the *contadi*, as will be seen, while economic and strategic reasons suggested gratifying many townships by the confirmation or new grant of separate status. The necessities of patronage, joined to those of finance, made for an increasing use of enfeoffments.

The distancing of the centre of power, though, rendered it impracticable to regulate the territory exclusively through bilateral agreements between the prince and all the subjects, taken one by one, and was more consonant with a territorial gradation of ranks that restored to the cities part of their primacy.⁵⁴ The preamble to a diplomatic report from the 1660s, preserved at Madrid, is eloquent concerning the visibility of territorial identities: "The state of Milan has today only ten cities with their own territory, which is called *contado* there. Milan is the metropolis . . . The province dependent on this city is called the 'duchy'".⁵⁵

The fortunes of urban primacy in the modern age fluctuated in accordance with situations that will be here shortly epitomized. At the end of the sixteenth century the relations between the cities and their *contadi* in fiscal matters were redefined, with the balance more in favour of the countryside, so that the *privilegium civitatis* was consequently weakened.⁵⁶ The crisis spanning the 1620s and 1630s, to continue the chronology, certainly marked a significant decline in the history of the Lombard cities, suffering demographic losses and the stagnation, if not the ruin, of manufacturing.⁵⁷ Patriciates, who had also been hit by the negative circumstances, in some cases were reduced and impoverished, in others were able to respond by relaxing class barriers and bringing in fresh forces.⁵⁸ At the same time in the *contado* larger communities

54 Visconti, *La pubblica amministrazione*, p. 132; Federico Chabod, *Storia di Milano nell'epoca di Carlo v* (Torino 1971), p. 414; Sella, *Sotto il dominio della Spagna*, pp. 23ff; Pissavino, "Per un'immagine sistemica", pp. 183ff.

55 *Relación del Estado di Milàn, sus ciudades, y territorios, su temple, y calidad, confines, y governo politico, y militar (1662–1668)*, in *Lo Stato di Milano nel XVII secolo. Memoriali e relazioni*, eds Massimo Carlo Giannini, Gianvittorio Signorotto (Roma 2006), p. 98. For the sixteenth century, see Arcangeli, "Nello Stato di Milano", p. 498.

56 Giorgio Chittolini, "L'affermazione di contadi e territori", in *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 211–226 (220).

57 Sella, *L'economia lombarda*, pp. 145–180; Giulio Guderzo, "Pavia 'moderna' fra immagine tramandata e realtà fattuale", in *Storia di Pavia*, IV, *L'età spagnola e austriaca*, Vol. I (Milano 1995), pp. 9–24.

58 Giulio Vismara, "Le istituzioni del patriziato", in *Storia di Milano*, XI (Milano 1958), pp. 226–282; Chiara Porqueddu, "Istituzioni e società tra l'inizio del dominio spagnolo e la fine del dominio austriaco", in *Storia di Pavia*, IV, pp. 25–110; Federico Barbierato, "Al governo della

became more aggressive against the fiscal privileges of the cities, strong in a growth that contrasted with urban economic decline.

But the sources produced in the early eighteenth century by the cadastral surveys and the frequent negotiations between the *Giunta del censimento* and territorial subjects bear witness to the comprehensive capacity for recovery of urban elites. At this period these still appeared to be firmly rooted in the countryside and ready to relaunch the role of the city in the centuries-old political contest with the rural world.⁵⁹ From the perspective of identity (to anticipate some final reflections), it does not seem that either the neo-feudal families, often now of urban origin, or the *terre separate*, or the newly-incorporated *contadi*, succeeded in equalling the cities. The documentation shows them for the most part embroiled in wearisome juridical disputes over taxes and borders, totally identified with their respective claims but incapable of producing territorial cultures of any depth as viable alternatives to the civic ones.⁶⁰ Only the major townships could aspire to stand out on this plane, but their old tendency to emulate the cities also ended by playing in favour of the urban model.

If the territory is seen from the perspective of the subjectivities that were expressed in it, in the entire period under consideration cities remained the landmarks in the physical, cultural and political landscape of Lombardy. Given the multicentric view carefully outlined by recent historical studies, over the course of three centuries, and more so in the modern era, urban identities resonated insistently and for longer than all the others populating this rich panorama.⁶¹

Federal Formations

Supralocal vocations in the period under consideration were not confined to the cities: other subjects with a significant territorial projection emerged to bring together a more or less large number of centres. Reviewing communities

città. Aristocrazia e istituzioni in età spagnola", in *Storia di Cremona. L'età degli Asburgo di Spagna*, pp. 58–105.

59 Cesare Mozzarelli, *Sovrano, società, amministrazione locale nella Lombardia teresiana. 1749–1758* (Bologna 1982).

60 Emanuele Colombo, "Costruire contadi. Il Vigevanasco in età moderna", in *Quaderni storici*, 139 (2012), pp. 15–45.

61 On the gaps in the historiography, see Letizia Arcangeli, "Nello stato di Milano sulle tracce di Leandro Alberti. Alcune note su politica e territorio nel primo Cinquecento", in *L'Italia dell'inquisitore. Storia e geografia dell'Italia del Cinquecento nella Descriptio di Leandro Alberti*, ed. Massimo Donattini (Bologna 2007), pp. 479–506 (492).

in their various dimensions, mention must be made of the more important federal forms operating in the territory of the state of Milan, in order to comprehend, on the basis of available studies, their capacity to stimulate in their turn processes of identification.

These extensive patchworks acquired a juridical persona through processes promoted in part by the territory itself, in part by the central state, usually to provide better for the distribution of taxation or, on the contrary, to incorporate communities having a right to exemptions. The allocation of tax quotas, as is well known, passed down through successive divisions, in accordance with the original corporative fabric of the state. Such a fabric was not, however, entirely predetermined, but could be remodelled on the basis of new requirements, for example, that of communities to co-ordinate themselves into larger groups to augment their own negotiating weight, or that of the central authorities to reduce the number of subjects with which they had to deal. Instances which, in fact, stimulated the birth of the federal formations under discussion. Such ambits were often made to coincide with circumscriptions of decentralized jurisdiction.

Since the communal era there had been the web of *pievi*, ecclesiastical partitions comprising dozens of parishes, used by public authorities for fiscal purposes and, from the late Middle Ages at least, represented by a council of delegates of the communities.⁶² In the mountainous areas and in some districts on the lakes, far from urban centres, marked by difficult terrain and scattered settlements, in the fourteenth century there was superimposed on the network of parishes a broader structure, with the union of the *pievi* into valley or lake-side communities.⁶³ Valley communities were notably present everywhere in the Alpine areas and demonstrated an exceptional capacity to endure. Yet it has been observed that the efficacy of their identity was not in general comparable to that of the communities: they appeared formed for a specific purpose, juridical persons with little symbolic substance, or patrimony.⁶⁴ Only a thin social stratum of professionals, merchants, contractors, and landowners succeeded in recognizing the supralocal scale as their own. Some emotional investment could be detected when the juridical condition of separation enjoyed by many

62 Del Tredici, *Comunità*, p. 60; *Novae constitutiones dominii mediolanensis* (1541), Book v, Heading iv: *Quod Capitanei Marthesane et Sepri*.

63 Giorgio Chittolini, "Principe e comunità alpine", in *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 127–144.

64 Massimo Della Misericordia, "La comunità sovralocale. Università di valle, di lago, di pieve nell'organizzazione politica del territorio nella Lombardia dei secoli XIV–XVI", in *Lo spazio politico locale in età medievale, moderna e contemporanea*, eds Renato Bordone, Paola Guglielmotti, Sandro Lombardini, Angelo Torre (Alessandria 2007), pp. 99–112.

valleys seemed in danger, or when there was a dispute with the fiefholder, if, as often happened, the area was subject to such a bond.⁶⁵

The territorial divisions produced by the factional allegiances of local bodies became involved in these frameworks, which were already operative in the Visconti era. In the late Middle Ages, in fact, noble families were present at all levels, in the urban centres but also in the *pievi* and in the valleys, and appeared quite active in moulding not only the social relations of clientèles imbued with factional culture, in the period already described for the cities, but also the territory.⁶⁶

A good example is provided by the birth of the Monte di Brianza, a territorial *universitas* that was constituted between the dukedom of Gian Galeazzo and the mid-fifteenth century around an alliance of Ghibelline families residing in the communities of the Martesana situated near to Lecco, in the heart of the Brianza.⁶⁷ The first duke rewarded the political and military support received from the local Ghibelline association with fiscal privileges that, confirmed by his successors, stimulated the formation of a new territorial body, united by a common juridical status in relation to the ducal fisc.

The second half of the sixteenth century saw all the *contadi* of the Lombard plain, including Vigevano's new one, transformed into territorial bodies.⁶⁸ The reform of the land tax ordered by Charles V as lord of Milan led to the revision of the assessment under Philip II, and opened a new season of the development of federal formations. These proposed for themselves the dual scope of representing the interests of the associated communities before the monarch and of exercising attributions recognized by the king himself in the division and exaction of the impost.⁶⁹ The principle of the personal nature of the obligations to pay, which distinguished between *cives* and rustics, sharpened the conflict between cities and communities in the countryside. The former were joined in the *Congregazione dello Stato*, which brought their delegates together, the latter were linked as *contadi* in their respective provincial *Congregazione*. Later on the "syndics" of these provincial bodies were granted access to the assembly in which the cities were represented.

65 Dattero, *La famiglia Manzoni*.

66 For an acute synthesis, see Gentile, *Factions and parties*, p. 312.

67 Zenobi, *Nascita di un territorio*.

68 A survey in Chittolini, "L'affermazione di contadi e territori", in *Città, comunità e feudi*.

69 Giovanni Vigo, *Fisco e società nella Lombardia del Cinquecento* (Bologna 1979).

The incorporated *contadi* became important subjects on the Lombard scene, recognized and given audience by the royal authorities.⁷⁰ They engaged in a committed legal battle with their respective cities to win administrative autonomy in tax collection and obtain a more equitable distribution of the military burdens. Politically, the operation could be considered a success: at the end of the century there was a more balanced division of taxation and the disparity of treatment between rural and civic property was significantly reduced.

It is less easy to assess the outcome of this complex matter in terms of territorial identities. The incorporation of the *contadi* certainly stimulated new processes of recognition, but it is doubtful whether strong collective solidarities were developed in this direction. In fact, these formations should not be thought of as cohesive spaces: the presence of urban property, intermingled with rural property, gave them a pierced backdrop that did not encourage the symbolic transposition of juridical corporeity. Nor did the choices of the institutions of the *contado* gain the massive adhesion of the rural population, because they all too evidently corresponded to the interests of the township elites. The *contadi*, like the valleys, although endowed with intangible, juridical and political structures, did not have enough property to distribute economic benefits to their adherents and in that way cultivate robust feelings of membership.⁷¹ Lastly, their dependence on the city is well testified by the city itself being the place where the rural representatives used to meet.

A Regional Territorial Identity?

In the era of the Visconti and the Sforza the territory of the state was constructed, as has been said, through bilateral pacts that conferred a composite form on it. This method obviously did not encourage the elaboration of a unifying identity other than that incarnated by the person of the sovereign. Nevertheless, some elements of a collective consciousness expressed from

70 Bruno Caizzi, *Il comasco sotto il dominio spagnolo* (Como 1955), pp. 17–53; Chiara Porqueddu, “Le origini delle istituzioni ‘provinciali’ nel Principato di Pavia”, in *Annali di storia pavese*, 2–3 (1980); Barbara Molteni, “I contadi dello Stato di Milano fra XVI e XVII secolo”, in *Studi bresciani*, 12 (1983), pp. 115–135; Alessandro Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio. Alloggiamenti militari e “case herme” nello stato di Milano (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Firenze 2009).

71 Chittolini, “L’affermazione di contadi e territori”, p. 222; Colombo, “Costruire contadi”.

below did register over time, to which some concluding considerations will be addressed.⁷²

In the communal era the Po valley had experienced extended forms of spontaneous co-ordination, under the guise of leagues of the cities.⁷³ On one side, these links were nourished by membership of the factions, on whose basis coalitions were usually structured. On the other, Milan played a central role in promoting the leagues, taking a leading position in the struggle of the communes against the empire, as a hegemonic city for a substantial and quite stable group of urban centres. In the prehistory of the State of Milan, therefore, there was repeated, if discontinuous, experience of a space above the level of the cities, opened up by the will of the adherent communes or the parties who dominated them. Its impact on the construction of a regional memory has yet to be evaluated.⁷⁴

With the conclusion of the emergency of the war with the emperor, Milanese hegemony faded, to be revived sporadically, for the last time in the brief history of the Ambrosian republic after the death of Filippo Maria Visconti, which saw a certain number of urban and rural communities accept the supremacy of the metropolis. As for the ducal era, neither the Visconti nor the Sforza backed any vocation of the capital to make itself the dominant city.⁷⁵ For this reason, Milan saw its own role definitively reduced to that of a subject city like the others. As compensation, it was granted a particularly favourable set of privileges, which would always arouse the hostility of the second rank cities. This process came to a close in the early sixteenth century, when the local government of the metropolis was renewed with the institution of a Council similar to that operating elsewhere.⁷⁶ The ordinances of the capital were then

72 Simona Mori, "La Lombardia settecentesca come ipotesi di spazio nazionale: iniziativa asburgica e culture territoriali a confronto", in *Nazioni d'Italia. Identità politiche e appartenenze regionali fra Settecento e Ottocento*, eds Angela De Benedictis, Irene Fosi, Luca Mannori (Roma 2012), pp. 53–74.

73 Massimo Vallerani, "La politica degli schieramenti: reti podestarili e alleanze intercittadine nella prima metà del Duecento", in *Comuni e signorie nell'Italia settentrionale: la Lombardia*, pp. 427–453.

74 Some remarks in Simonetta Soldani, "Il Medioevo del Risorgimento nello specchio della nazione", in *Arti e storia nel Medioevo*, eds Enrico Castelnuovo, Giuseppe Sergi (Torino 2004), Vol. IV: *Il Medioevo al passato e al presente*, pp. 149–186.

75 Somaini, "Processi costitutivi"; Giorgio Chittolini, "La crisi dello stato milanese alla fine del Quattrocento", in Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi*, pp. 167–180 (179).

76 Letizia Arcangeli, "Milano durante le guerre d'Italia (1499–1529): esperimenti di rappresentanza e identità cittadina", in *Società e storia*, 104 (2004), pp. 225–266.

inserted, exceptionally, in the *Novae Constitutiones*, in a way sanctioning them as an exemplar, but not as superior.⁷⁷

From the mid fifteenth century to the Spanish era, the notable feature of the dominion of Lombardy was not so much the existence of a hierarchy among the cities, as their multicentric disposition.⁷⁸ A low level of economic concentration contributed to a balanced structure that allowed both different urban centres and townships room to grow. This has been called, with reference to the seventeenth century, “regionalization”.⁷⁹ It is not yet clear how this would have interacted with the processes of identity. Certainly, from that pluralistic, reticulate fabric, further complicated by the constitution of the *contadi*, there sprang energetic, persistent litigiousness.

From the last decades of the sixteenth century the controversies between the territorial bodies of Lombardy had a seat of collective negotiation in the *Congregazione dello Stato*. Developing out of the earlier *Congregazione* of the duchy of Milan, presided over by the major civic official of the capital, this brought together, as has been said, the envoys of the cities of the State, later joined by the representatives of the *contadi* and of the remaining *terre separate*.⁸⁰ It never attained the standing of an organ of representation of estates, but always acted on a pragmatic, customary plane, in confirmation of the organic weakness of the State, and of the slight inclination of the Spanish monarchy to encourage a greater integration of the territory.

The activity of this institution, whose records have been partly lost, is known only through isolated instances and episodes, and this constitutes a serious gap in the historiography of the State of Milan.⁸¹ From what has emerged, it appears that it rarely acted as a body, but functioned as an arena for conflict and, if possible, mediation between the interests of particular urban and rural subjects, at most as an ambit for the action of temporary coalitions formed for

77 *Novae Constitutiones dominii mediolanensis*, ed. Gabriele Verri (Milano 1764), Book v.

78 Giorgio Chittolini, “Alcune note sul Ducato di Milano nel Quattrocento”, in *Principi e città alla fine del medioevo*, ed. Sergio Gensini (Pisa 1996), pp. 413–433; Arcangeli, “Nello Stato di Milano”, p. 496.

79 Apart from the contribution of Giovanna Tonelli in this volume, see Stephan R. Epstein, “Town and country: economy and institutions in late medieval Italy”, *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 46, 3 (1993), pp. 453–477.

80 Ettore Verga, “La Congregazione del Ducato e l'amministrazione dell'antica provincia di Milano (1561–1759)”, *Archivio storico lombardo*, 22 (1895), pp. 383–407.

81 Porqueddu, “Le origini delle istituzioni ‘provinciali’”; Simona Mori, “Il governo cittadino fra tradizione e trasformazione”, in *Storia di Cremona. Il Settecento*, ed. Carlo Capra (Azzano San Paolo 2009), pp. 116–151.

opportunistic reasons. Predictably, the bitterest conflicts were produced by the inequalities in favour of Milan, that the city strenuously defended.⁸²

Beyond the inexhaustible disputes over taxation and military lodgings, it would be useful to investigate, in provincial archives, the theme of relations between the cities, to evaluate the criteria on which the order of precedence among them was established and how far it was agreed, the existence of channels of communication and of exchange of institutional culture, the effects of the circulation of officials, and also the relations, public and private, between the civic patriciates, and the interference coming from the parallel network of ecclesiastical institutions.⁸³

Here it can be asked, what was the role played in territorial integration by the central power? Under the dukes, attempts to impart from above centripetal orientations and to amalgamate the components of the State to some degree, were not lacking. The project of Gian Galeazzo to abolish the ban on *cives* of one centre acquiring property in the *contado* of another, which was dropped because of the protests of the communities, comes to mind.⁸⁴ In the modern era, there was indeed penetration of various *contadi* by 'outside' property-holding, but always with the formation of bodies of "interested parties", conspicuous among them that of the Milanese, who maintained a particular fiscal regime, generating acute discontent in the places affected.⁸⁵

The jurists in the service of Filippo Maria Visconti went so far as to conceive a plan for unitary sovereignty over the state, hypothesizing the equalizing of territorial subjects, from cities to communities and fiefs, in the manner of the Roman law provinces.⁸⁶ But, predictably, the idea could not be translated into practice, until much later, with much effort and only temporary success, by Joseph II in what was then Austrian Lombardy.

It has been seen that the Spanish monarchs, while aiming to pacify the conflicts between territorial bodies, kept the profile of the *Congregazione dello Stato* low and set up clienteles that reached vertically from the court to the

82 Signorotto, *Milano spagnola*, p. 234; Alessandro Buono, "Amministrazione militare e gestione dell'esercito in uno Stato 'pre-amministrativo'. Il caso della Lombardia spagnola (sec. XVII)", *Archivio storico italiano*, 620 (2009), pp. 521–551.

83 The *communis opinio* followed by the *Relacion del Estado de Milan* gives the order: Milan, Pavia and Cremona, Lodi and Novara, Como, Alessandria, Tortona, Vigevano, Bobbio.

84 Leverotti, "Leggi del principe, leggi della città", pp. 172ff.

85 *Relazione dello stato in cui si trova l'opera del Censimento universale del Ducato di Milano nel mese di maggio dell'anno 1750 di Pompeo Neri*, ed. Franco Saba (Milano 1985), p. 36.

86 Cengarle, *Immagine di potere*, p. 77. On the attempts to unify the state, see also Jane Black, "The emergence of the Duchy of Milan: language and the territorial state", *Reti medievali rivista*, 14, 1 (2013), pp. 197–210.

various peripheries.⁸⁷ A particular concern of their Councils was the distribution of royal offices, which recognized the principle that they should be given to natives of the duchy, although with provision for quotas destined for foreign, above all Spanish, functionaries.⁸⁸ The composition of the native portion represented what Lombardy was at the time, according to the prevailing balance of forces. Given that Milan was always much favoured, the space destined to patricians from other cities—never from the *contadi*, so far as is known—reflected both established precedences, by which Pavia and Cremona usually had the advantage, and also the negotiating power that the local elites could deploy at court on that occasion.

The field in which the state of Milan was most successful in expressing a shared culture, fruit of interaction between the regulatory action of the centre and participation of the urban peripheries, was that of the law. The institution of the Senate, supreme royal court of justice, in the early sixteenth century began the deposit of a Lombard jurisprudence which, on the substrate of common roman law and of ducal and royal legislation, consolidated in the *Novae Constitutiones* of 1541, had to integrate local laws in a regional law. In this process the predictable preeminence recognized for Milanese municipal law was in part balanced by the heterogeneity of the composition of the Senate. A 'native' law, therefore, was probably at the core of the weak overall territorial identity that can now be hypothesized for Spanish Lombardy, a learned heritage and institutional sign of a common history, woven not only from contrasts but from analogies, communication and exchanges among the rich local identities that have been discussed in these pages.⁸⁹

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89 Maria Gigliola Di Renzo Villata, “Tra *ius nostrum* e *ius commune*. Il diritto patrio del Ducato di Milano”, in *Il diritto patrio tra diritto comune e codificazione (secoli XVI–XIX)*, eds Italo Birocchi, A. Mattone (Roma 2006), pp. 217–254.

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Founding a Social Cosmos: Perspectives for a Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Lombardy¹

Massimo Della Misericordia

Introduction

In the last three decades, until very recent signs of diminishing interest, anthropological studies have been widely read and discussed by Italian historians, including historians of early modern Lombardy. Comparisons with political anthropology have helped to bring into focus new protagonists in public life (factions and lineages), and in rethinking other subjects, more familiar to the historiographical tradition (communities) and, in general, relations between the centre and periphery of the state (thanks to concepts of mediation and clientage).² Juridical anthropology has suggested methods of analysing conflict and the many ways of conducting it and resolving it, practical arrangements and ritual behaviours, from the system of vendetta to urban collective violence, long perceived as anomic.³ Economic anthropology has facilitated the interpretation of behaviours dictated by reasons other than those of the maximization of material profit, and of values attributed to things transcending those assigned to them by the market. Preceding this had been the renewal of investigations of religious and secular ceremonies and so-called “popular” beliefs, fed by a wide range of stimuli coming from cultural anthropology, but also from the history of religion and from international historiography. Finally, an impressive ethnographic enquiry, promoted by the Regione Lombardia,

1 I would like to thank Federico Del Tredici, Andrea Gamberini and Marco Gentile for their comments.

2 Beginning with Daniele Andreozzi, *Nascita di un disordine. Una famiglia signorile e una valle piacentina tra XV e XVI secolo* (Milan, 1993).

3 Marco Gentile, *Fazioni al governo. Politica e società a Parma nel Quattrocento* (Rome, 2009); Stella Leprai, *Il governo del disordine ai confini di uno stato. Borgotaro e gli Sforza (1467–1488)* (Bologna, 2011).

above all in the 1970s, could offer many suggestions to historians, and here I shall seek to bear it in mind as a background to the themes to be discussed.⁴

The most recent research, however, has paid little attention to a subject of keen interest to previous generations of historians, that of cultural alterity, of the coexistence, at the same time and in the same space, of different world outlooks. Doubtless, it is no longer possible to employ the label “popular culture”, a notion which has appeared ever more inadequate over the past twenty years. The head-on clash of antagonistic “mentalities”, which were collectively assimilated by those belonging to the same social environment, has not been verified by empirical research. Peasant traditions, the programmes of the centres of power, the values of elites were articulated and communicated across the groups, and encountered one another in ways that were more complex than the model of inevitable resistance, defeat and conformity of the “subordinate” cultures to innovations coming from above. Lombard scholars, however, have not in most cases drawn methodological inspiration from the anthropological literature only for history that could be described as primarily social history. Elsewhere in Italy, in fact, research has been centred on the strategies of individuals, families and groups engaged in defining their own physiognomy, constructing their own legitimacy and pursuing their own political or economic interests. Emphasis has been placed on the use by social actors of the resources put at their disposal by institutions of lay and ecclesiastical government, as well as of languages and rituals, seen as instruments with which to confirm the identity and prestige useful in resolving conflicts to their own advantage.

Those investigating the past of Lombardy, however, have not abandoned the attempt to root individual behaviour in codes shared within particular social and territorial contexts. Nor have they wanted to follow much contemporary anthropology in describing as cultural “contaminations” and “hybridizations” the dialectic developed historically between political, economic and religious discourses linking, and which linked the higher political and ecclesiastical powers, urban elites and rural communities, academic authors and so on. Consequently, the phenomena of circularity have been analysed, as well as those of the sometimes epoch-making breaches that occurred between different social environments and different cultural codes. Thus it has emerged, for example, that in the late-medieval countryside principles of political belonging flourished founded on the personal loyalty of peasant to lord, which could

4 *Patrimoni sonori della Lombardia. Le ricerche dell'Archivio di etnografia e storia sociale*, eds Renata Meazza and Nicola Scaldaferrì (Rome, 2008).

not be reduced to the territorial rationality that the urban communes, with its lawyers, sought to impose.⁵

Moreover, historical discourse is today freed from the evolutionary paradigms imposed on rationalization, state discipline and the civilization of behaviour, the individualization of political relations and the market economy, seen as fundamental to the development of the West, then propagated throughout the world, and therefore chosen as the privileged, if not exclusive, object of discourses on the past. Even in the “advanced” region of Europe there have been rediscovered *habitus* and behaviours that cannot be reduced to modernity, in which subordinate groups, but also the aristocracy and clergy participated, and which should be taken into consideration. Otherwise, research runs the risk of a simplistic approach to the words of the sources and to the actions documented there, which does not take into account their opacity to the distant gaze of the historian and reads them without placing them in a context of specific meanings and values.

Because it is obviously impossible to recount in a few pages all the complex socio-cultural stratification of Lombardy, which has, indeed, been investigated only in part by research that can be reported, I shall propose here a much more limited compass. I shall analyze the practices of the reproduction of social and political relations, seeking to discuss, concisely, the greatest number of themes which have been the object of renewed interest and leaving more space to the protagonists that the encounter between history and anthropology has brought to the fore in recent years (lineages, communities and factions). Besides, although anthropological and historico-anthropological studies have now superseded the once privileged scale of the village, it will be unavoidable, in the current state of research, to pay greater attention to realities that were more peripheral than to the centres of “high politics” and “high culture”. The central aim will be to examine how group identities, social cohesion and political loyalty did not rest only on a conventional and utilitarian foundation, but were based on profound feelings of identification, culturally dense rituals and symbols of unity, eloquent in communication and of recognized efficacy in action.

5 Andrea Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo. Linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milan, 2005), pp. 203–230.

Social and Political Bodies Made Flesh: Signs and Emotions

The corporative model of society, which in this period enjoyed wide approval, permitted the conception of a unifying synthesis of distinct parties, and the search for an equilibrium between them. Collective identities and their cohabitation, however, did not come about automatically, but through complex processes, sustained by concrete experiences of self-identification of the individual with the group, personified symbolically. The units of which society was constituted, in short, were not mere aggregations of interests more or less defined in law. Recent research on Lombardy has revealed languages and practices of relations that cannot be seen simplistically through contemporary analytical categories. To such units, in fact, a natural and symbolic cohesion was attributed: sometimes a fictitious biological identity, as well as a name or other sign capable of making them real. This accords with a specific anthropology, according to which the *being* of a person was essentially social, a *being part of a* community, a lineage or a faction, an emotionally intense experience.⁶

It was considered, for example, that individuals adhered to the Guelf or the Ghibelline party of their own free will, but that their choice was a matter of nature and origin. They were, therefore, “de genere gibillinorum” or “gelforum”, as though it was a matter of ancestry.⁷ The local community itself was thought of as a biological unit, beyond the real blood ties among the inhabitants: for the Council of Vigevano in 1453, a foreigner was “qui non sit de sanguine Viglevani”. The man who followed the trade of his father was “born into the craft”.⁸

Such subjects identified themselves with a name. That of the family was borne with pride by members of the lineage, proclaimed by followers when they saluted faction-leaders, but insulted by enemies, who defamed it in public

6 On communitarian phenomena, see Massimo Della Misericordia, *Divenire comunità. Comuni rurali, poteri locali, identità sociali e territoriali in Valtellina e nella montagna lombarda nel tardo medioevo* (Milan, 2006); *Idem*, *I nodi della rete. Paesaggio, società e istituzioni a Dalegno e in Valcamonica nel tardo medioevo*, 2nd edn (Morbegno, 2012); Alma Poloni, *Castione della Presolana nel medioevo. Economia e società nella montagna bergamasca dal XII al XVI secolo* (Castione della Presolana, 2011); Federico Del Tredici, *Comunità, nobili e gentiluomini nel contado di Milano del Quattrocento* (Milan, 2013).

7 For this and what follows concerning factions, see Marco Gentile, “Discorsi sulle fazioni, discorsi delle fazioni. “Parole e demonstratione parziale” nella Lombardia del secondo Quattrocento”, in *I linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento (secoli XIV–XV)*, eds A. Gamberini and G. Petralia (Rome, 2007), pp. 381–408.

8 Patrizia Mainoni, “Viglaebium opibus primum”. Uno sviluppo economico nel Quattrocento lombardo”, in *Metamorfosi di un borgo. Vigevano in età visconteo-sforzesca*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini (Milan, 1992), pp. 193–266, p. 209; Del Tredici, *Comunità*, p. 241.

writings or derided it by plays on words. In the case of factions the name was a coagulant of the group, of such evocative force that the central powers, when they tried to disband the parties, forbade the utterance of the words Guelf, Ghibelline or Popolo. The name of the community was assumed legitimately by those who worked for the collective interest (elected “*nomine communis*”), while it could be said to be profaned by those who acted to their own advantage, passing themselves off as representing all the others.

The individual was also identified by a name and a surname, whose cultural implications have not yet been studied exhaustively by the research dedicated to Lombardy in the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. But it is known that the name served to situate a person in the lineage, when the baby was assigned the name formerly borne by a grandparent who was in some way brought back to life, or when it echoed the surname. At least up to the fifteenth century, moreover, some men bore as a personal name that of the commune in which they lived (*Dalenus* at Dalegno), almost as though their identity, expressed by what was *par excellence* the sign of an individual, was an emanation of that of the community. Others perpetuated in their surname the name of the place of origin that they or their grandfathers had abandoned, or the name, nickname or trade of an outstanding ancestor, who had decisively promoted the social, political or economic fortunes of the family.

Lineages, communities, corporations were endowed with emblems, embroidered on garments, engraved into household furniture, appearing in jewels or on liturgical objects donated to churches, exhibited in palaces, displayed on the standards flown during civic festivities. Family arms, in particular, brought together consciousness of belonging, descent and onomastic identity. So-called “speaking” arms, in fact, developed a representation of the surname, such as the barrel (*botte*) of the Bottigella of Pavia or the ox (*bue*) of the Cavalcabò of Cremona. As an example of a surname derived from the nickname of a founding ancestor, the Acquistapace, a family from the Valtellina and Lario, perpetuated the memory of Guarisco, known as *Aquistapax*, presumably a skilful mediator who had lived in the first half of the fourteenth century, and in the eighteenth century exhibited a coat of arms in which two hands were clasped, in sign of peace, with a palm in the background.⁹ The passionate identification developed in conflict, when competing lineages vied to display their own emblem in the most visible way, and sullied those of their enemies with excrement or parodied them, is therefore significant.

9 *Stemmario Trivulziano*, ed. Carlo Maspoli (Milan, 2000); *Stemmi della “Rezia Minore”. Gli armoriali conservati nella Biblioteca civica “Pio Rajna” di Sondrio*, eds Francesco Palazzi Trivella, Maria Praolini Corazza and Niccolò Orsini De Marzo (Sondrio, 1996), p. 18.

Other external signs communicated factional orientation—the colour and position of a feather in a hat, or the colour of clothes—so that adherence to a group came to be worn in a way like a second skin.

The emotional life of individuals was stirred by vehement feelings of belonging to a faction, to a lineage, or to a community. Friendship strengthened the ties of neighbourhood; love was reciprocated between the lord and patron and his followers; Guelf or Ghibelline orientation was an *affezione*; collective honour dictated that an injury inflicted on a relative should be felt as a personal shame, and justified the hatred for enemies on whom revenge was to be taken.¹⁰

Conflict, therefore, was not only a lacerating experience, but an integral part of the practical and emotional construction of groups. Carrying out policing functions called for the mobilization (*currere*) of all able-bodied adults to capture a robber, hunt down a murderer, or oppose the incursion of enemies of the community into a collectively-owned pasture. This would be an experience of notable sensory intensity: the victim would cry aloud for help, a *rumor* would be raised, the bells of the communal *palazzo* or the church would summon the men, who would gather “all together”, as though personifying the *universitas*. The fact that failures to perform such functions—from not reporting a crime to covering up smuggling—could be imputed to the local community as a whole and to all its members, diminished the sense of individual responsibility and promoted awareness of forming part of a single body.¹¹

A feud also consolidated or broke apart the social unit that gave life to it, the lineage, clarifying the bonds of solidarity operating at the moment of the affront, the response and the peace. It delimited, that is, the group that felt it had suffered, as a whole, the offence against a single person, involved its members in the reaction to it and in respecting the undertakings for the suspension of hostilities concluded with the rival group, and revealed the internal hierarchy of leaders and followers.¹²

All this could embody the metaphor that personified social groups, by which, if a faction had a “head”, the most faithful followers could come to be identified as its heart.¹³

10 Marco Gentile, “Hatred and love, friendship and enmity in the political culture of Lombard landed nobility”, in Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting (Venice, 8th–10th April 2010), Panel: *Emotions, Passions and Power in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy*.

11 Massimo Della Misericordia, “Comunità, istituzioni giudiziarie, conflitto e pace nella montagna lombarda nel tardo medioevo”, *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen âge*, 122 (2010), 137–170.

12 Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo*, pp. 245–264.

13 L. Arcangeli, “Principi, homines e ‘partesani’ nel ritorno dei Rossi”, in *Le signorie dei Rossi di Parma tra XIV e XVI secolo*, eds L. Arcangeli and M. Gentile (Florence, 2007), pp. 231–306, pp. 242–243.

Religion

Social relations were a critical experience: the equilibrium between individuals and groups had to be rediscovered constantly, the position of each reestablished from time to time. Religious rites served to render human actions towards this end more efficacious. Among other things, it safeguarded both the aspects of the social dynamic, as they were conceived by corporative ideology but were difficult to reconcile in practice: the detailed articulation of the community to the point where it crumbled, and the coexistence of its individual groups.

First of all, for the group to survive it was essential to assure continuity in the inevitable replacement of individual components, and consequently for the link between its living members and the dead to endure. A lineage, confraternity, corporation, or rural commune constituted a community of interest among the living, but also a community of prayers for the dead. Men and women who were nearing their end established masses of intercession that relatives, neighbours, members of the confraternity were to have celebrated: individual salvation came in this way to depend on the persistence of social ties. At the same time they rewarded members of such units, paying for distributions of wine, bread, cheese and other foodstuffs, sometimes destined in particular for those present at the masses.¹⁴

Funeral rites also had the function of indicating a social taxonomy. The costs of the exequies, the dignity of the ceremony and the final destination of the corpse distinguished the “dead of the commune” from “dead foreigners”, men from women, children from adults, nobles from non-nobles neighbours and so on. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in churches and cemeteries, the tombs belonging to the confraternities, corporations and families of the first rank were separated from the ordinary tombs of children, women and men, and those of nobles from those of non-nobles.

Building works cemented the social group. Lineages, confraternities, corporations, urban and rural communities all expended the resources, large or small, that they had at their disposal to found churches and chapels. Glass windows, paintings and sculpture accommodated coats of arms, whose significance, not only as a signal, but as a unifying emblem has already been described; on the walls, the effigies of the founders and the inscriptions that remembered them can still be found.

¹⁴ Massimo Della Misericordia, “I confini della solidarietà. Pratiche e istituzioni caritative in Valtellina nel tardo medioevo”, in *Contado e città in dialogo. Comuni urbani e comunità rurali nella Lombardia medievale*, ed. L. Chiappa Mauri (Milan, 2003), pp. 411–489.

At the same time the church lent itself to inclusion: private patronage in a community parish church, for example, made recognizable within a shared arena spaces attributed to individuals, families or groups—an aristocratic chapel, a fresco commissioned by a single devotee, an altar around which a confraternity met.¹⁵ Indeed in the countryside, immigrants and nobles often identified with the parish, instituting the celebration of masses of intercession there, for example, even where they did not feel part of the local commune. Women, in places where they did not participate in institutional assemblies, did take part when it was a question of electing a priest, and left legacies to the church, and hence felt they belonged to it and to the community of which, in this respect at least, they became an organic part.¹⁶

The church always offered itself as the ceremonial fulcrum of concord. Rites of peace between parties in conflict, processions for the restoration of social harmony, were set there. The clergy, secular and regular, inspired by their perception of their role, but also at the solicitation of laymen, engaged in mediation of interpersonal conflicts, both before and after the Tridentine reforms.¹⁷

The territory of the community was itself defined as ritual space. At its borders were placed crosses or letters which invoked the name of Christ, while shrines guarded the always contested markers that divided the space of one community from that of another. In one church were painted or sculpted the saints to whom were dedicated the churches of neighbouring places, as hypostases of those places: the patrons of the parish church, of the “pieve” (rural deanery), and of the diocese on which the village chapel depended; the protectors of all the centres of habitation dependent on a parish, and so on. The territorial order was reproduced and made sacred in the space of the fresco and the sculpture, entrusting to the patron saints the task of representing in harmony the relations, in reality often conflictual and juridically uncertain, between the various levels of lay and ecclesiastical organizations.¹⁸

15 *Famiglie e spazi sacri nella Lombardia del Rinascimento*, eds Letizia Arcangeli, Giorgio Chittolini, Federico Del Tredici and Edoardo Rossetti (Milano, 2014).

16 Federico Del Tredici, “Il posto del prete. Sacerdoti, parrocchie e comunità locali nelle campagne milanesi del Quattrocento”, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo. Istituzioni, religione e società a Milano agli inizi del Cinquecento*, eds Alberto Rocca and Paola Vismara (Rome-Milan, 2012), pp. 243–268.

17 Danilo Zardin, *Confraternite e vita di pietà nelle campagne lombarde tra '500 e '600. La pieve di Parabiago-Legnano* (Milan, 1981).

18 Massimo Della Misericordia, “Le origini di una chiesa di contrada: devozione e identità locale”, in *La chiesa della Santissima Trinità di Teregua in Valfurva. Storia, arte, devozione, restauro* (Milan, 2011), pp. 17–97.

Processions ordered territorial and social relations, in that the participation and positions to be occupied by the inhabitants or the representatives of different groups were established and disputed. The feast of the patron saint of the city was the occasion to affirm the subjection of places in the surrounding countryside, which in turn sought to free themselves from their subordination, avoiding having their inhabitants take part and bring an offering. The roles of civic neighbourhoods and of the corporations, who processed with their standards in solemn festivals, were also made manifest.¹⁹

Finally, the church could be the most telling location for a sacrifice competing with, but imitating, that which officially took place there. A political or personal enemy, the representative of a rival lineage with whom there was a feud, was sometimes killed in church. Just at the moment when Christ's sacrifice was being renewed, at the elevation of the host, the victim was cut down, picked out from the opposing group, who with the spilling of his blood compensated for the wrong suffered and reestablished the original order. The identical rite was carried out at Reggio in 1517, when the papal governor, considered partial and unjust, was attacked "when the priest, celebrating mass, elevated the consecrated host in memory of the Passion of Christ", and at Bergamo in 1563, with the arquebus shot from his enemies that mortally wounded conte Achille Brambati, "when the priest . . . raised the consecrated host".²⁰

Politics

Political relations were not ensured solely by government regulations intended to obtain the obedience of subjects or by continual negotiation between governors and the governed. From the studies of recent years has emerged the weight of persuasive symbols and of emotional involvement. The constitutional

19 Giorgio Chittolini, "Civic religion and the countryside in late medieval Italy", in *City and Countryside in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy. Essays Presented to Philip Jones*, eds Trevor Dean and Chris Wickham (London, 1990), pp. 69–80; *Le corporazioni milanesi e Sant'Ambrogio nel medioevo*, ed. Annamaria Ambrosioni (Milan, 1997); Andrea Gamberini, *Oltre le città. Assetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo medioevo* (Rome, 2009), pp. 79, 83–105.

20 Marco Gentile, "La vendetta di sangue come rituale. Qualche osservazione sulla Lombardia fra Quattro e Cinquecento", in *La morte e i suoi riti in Italia tra medioevo ed età moderna*, eds Francesco Salvestrini, Gian Maria Varanini and Anna Zangarini, (Florence, 2007), pp. 209–241, pp. 221–30 (with a reference to the chronicle of Guido Panciroli and to the study by Bortolo Belotti from which I have taken the quotations); Carlo Baja Guarienti, "Reggio, 28 giugno 1517. Liturgia di un omicidio", *Studi storici*, 49 (2008), 985–1000.

pact between prince and subjects, the ordinary practices of justice and institutional mediation thus assumed further profound significance.

Political correspondence of the fifteenth century made modest use of the demanding lexicon of sacrifice. The pact between prince and subjects was, however, insistently represented by the latter as being sealed by blood shed, by the offer of their lives to defend the regime, by the “sufferings endured” because of their fidelity. Through such sufferings, local lords and communities had acquired fiscal and jurisdictional privileges that the dukes had granted and which they had to observe in perpetuity.²¹ The administration of state justice had not entirely abandoned a concept of vengeful and ultimately sacrificial treatment of the accused, whose condemnation recompensed his victims and gave him up to God.²²

The duties of representation did not come down only to the juridical forms of the delegation of functions, but to a logic of intimate symbiosis: the ambassador of a community at court ideally made present all its members before the prince, as on the other side the official of the duke bore in some way to the periphery the very person of the lord, the principal ground of his honour and his identity.²³

The relations between prince and subjects were expressed in a sentimental manner. Between them there should be reciprocal “love”, but obviously, it was rarely an idyll. For the Visconti, declaring *affectio* towards men was also a way of reducing the precise constitutional obligations contracted towards them and reshaping the relationship in terms of the freely-given goodwill of the lord.²⁴ A no less important sentiment was fear, inspired by, for example, the looming fortifications with which princes and monarchs meant to

21 Massimo Della Misericordia, “Per non privarci de nostre raxone, li siamo stati desobidienti”. Patto, giustizia e resistenza nella cultura politica delle comunità alpine nello stato di Milano (xv secolo), in *Forme della comunicazione politica in Europa nei secoli xv–xviii. Suppliche, gravamina, lettere*, eds Cecilia Nubola and Andreas Würzler (Bologna, 2004), pp. 147–215.

22 Gentile, “La vendetta di sangue come rituale”, p. 229; Massimo Della Misericordia, “‘Uno ufficiale per governare questo paese’. Considerazioni a proposito della giustizia dello stato e della comunità a partire dalle valli lombarde nel tardo medioevo”, in *Medioevo dei poteri. Studi di storia per Giorgio Chittolini*, eds Maria Nadia Covini, Massimo Della Misericordia, Andrea Gamberini and Francesco Somaini (Rome, 2012), pp. 245–274, pp. 271–272.

23 Giorgio Chittolini, “L’onore dell’ufficiale”, *Quaderni milanesi* 17–18 (1989), 5–55.

24 Andrea Gamberini, “*Aequalitas, fidelitas, amicitia*”. Dibattiti sulla fiscalità nel dominio visconteo”, in *The languages of the political society*, eds Andrea Gamberini, Jean-Philippe Genet and Andrea Zorzi (Rome, 2011), pp. 429–460.

dominate urban spaces, changing the face of the city as it had been in the communal era.²⁵

Artistic patronage served to attract consensus. The Visconti, for example, to stabilize power that was expanding and of ambiguous legitimacy, sought to appropriate the force emanating from symbols attracting great devotion, such as the Virgin Mary, or traditional veneration, such as Ambrose, patron saint of the capital. So that in the funeral monument of Azzone (who died in 1339) the Visconti structure could be represented in the form of homage by the patron saints of the subject cities to the saint-bishop of Milan.²⁶

The arms and the banners of the dynasty in power, in the most visible public places, exercised suggestive force. They could express visceral identification. In 1515 the Milanese governor of Como said of the inhabitants of Torno, a little town (*burgus*) on the Lario, that “they had the coats of arms of the king of France impressed in their hearts”. Political loyalty thus became the incorporation of the monarch and the inscription on the vital organ *par excellence* of his emblems.²⁷

Religious and civic festivities, for peaces, births and funerals of members of the ruling family, the entries of their representatives (above all when Milan was no longer the residence of the *signore*) were occasions that brought together the powerful and the populace.²⁸

Some moments of local public life were also played out in a state of heightened emotion that helped to integrate the individual into the collective. The assemblies of heads of households, held in the village square, and councils were not only the arenas for debates regulated according to the civic ideology elaborated in the statutes, which laid down the rules for interventions and electoral protocols. Threats were uttered, speakers had tears in their eyes, many voices spoke at the same time, and came together in acclamation. This

25 Patrick Boucheron, *Le pouvoir de bâtir: urbanisme et politique éditiltaire à Milan. XIV–XV siècles* (Rome, 1998).

26 Evelyn S. Welch, *Art and Authority in Renaissance Milan* (New Haven-London, 1995); Guido Cariboni, “Comunicazione simbolica e identità cittadina a Milano presso i primi Visconti (1277–1354)”, *Reti medievali. Rivista* 9 (2008); Federica Cengarle, “I Visconti e il culto della Vergine (XIV secolo): qualche osservazione”, *Annali di Storia moderna e contemporanea* 16 (2010), 215–228.

27 Gentile, “Hatred and love”.

28 *La scena della gloria. Drammaturgia e spettacolo a Milano in età spagnola*, eds Annamaria Cascetta and Roberta Carpani (Milan, 1995); Silvio Leydi, *Sub umbra imperialis aquilae. Immagini del potere e consenso politico nella Milano di Carlo V* (Florence, 1999); Nadia Covini, “Feste e cerimonie milanesi tra città e corte. Appunti dai carteggi mantovani”, *Ludica* 7 (2001), 122–150.

excitement, however, was not the negation of communal political life but an aspect of it: thanks to the impetuous flow of words and gestures, participants affected one another, reaching unity.

In written documents reporting the actions of collectives the same experience was put into words, for example, using a plural verb to refer to a singular noun, “community”: “la comunitate . . . hanno ellezuto”. In this way the image of the collective as the sum of individuals and as a unitary subject were inextricably mixed.²⁹

The conflict that constantly threatened political cohesion was not removed, but symbolically ordered—made an integral part of the mechanisms of construction of public space. Ball games, mock (but really brutal) battles, in which children or adults confronted one another, carnival skirmishes, brawls during solemnities celebrating patron saints or other liturgical occasions, brought to the forefront the clash between ceremonial groupings, which often corresponded to actual social, party or territorial divisions. On feast days there were confrontations, with ritualized provocations that could degenerate into open violence, between urban quarters, nobles and *popolari*, neighbouring but rival communities, the large township and the peripheral valley dependent on it, the local people and outsiders. Discord thus assumed an ulterior sense. In these diverse circumstances, in fact, there can often be recognized the profile of agonistic rites which should assure the annual regeneration of nature and, in this case, of political society. Such traditions, that is, furnished actors who were more or less aware of it, with the format for ritual games or masquerades in which opposing formations would reinterpret the cosmic struggle between vital forces, whose victory had to be periodically assured, and negative forces.³⁰

Among others, the festival of Mayday was significant, when new trees were planted, catalyzing and diffusing renewed energy. At least up to the beginning of the sixteenth century, in an occasion in which there could be fear of some “disorder”, Guelfs and Ghibellines planted and decorated different trees: the former those with names of masculine gender, the latter those with names of feminine gender, identifying—in the language of a fundamental dualism—the two sides. That the protagonists of this rite should be, in their oppositional relationship, the factions, demonstrates that the dichotomy between Guelfs and Ghibellines, one of the most famous and least understood in Italian history,

29 Massimo Della Misericordia, “Principat, communauté et individu au bas moyen âge. Cultures politiques dans l’état de Milan”, *Médiévales* 57 (2009), 93–111.

30 Francesca Antonacci and Massimo Della Misericordia, *La guerra dei bambini. Gioco, violenza e rito a partire da una testimonianza rinascimentale* (Bormio, 1499) (Milan, 2013) (and for what follows).

was not expressed only through destructive partisan hatred, but as a polarity organic to the vital development of the community.³¹

The role of music, of song and dance in the local societies of Lombardy, could be better understood by historians. We know the processions of rejoicing for the victories of the prince, for the entry into the city of the official who represented him, the festivities for the births that gladdened the families of the monarchs, in which music, fireworks, the ringing of bells and acclamations created an atmosphere of collective participation. It would be desirable, however, to approach nearer to the relational mechanisms of specific environments. The pastimes of young people, in particular, served to identify groups (sharing age, gender, place of residence) and to transmit social and political provocations. Dance provided an opportunity for the exhibition of social distinctions, for the sexes to meet, and at the same time for rival communities or competing groups within the same community to clash, not infrequently with tragic consequences.³² Members of the same faction also met together to play music, dance and shout their own identifying slogans, in defiance of their adversaries. The “mattinata”, that din of song, instruments and uproar known as *charivari*, revealed an urban neighbourhood in action, its representatives claiming from a remarried widower the customary subvention for a collective meal (Parma, 1471); under the house of an official, it made manifest opposition to the fiefholding family (Mendrisio, 1464) or the Sforza regime (Piuro, 1478).³³

Economy

Today the economic behaviours of the pre-industrial age are being studied with increasing attention to their relational and cultural aspects. Personal interests, normative constraints and customary ties mingled to shape a complex code of conduct. Economic assets were not seen as a mere quantity to which to make a price correspond; there was a qualitative conception of them, that considered their symbolic force and the gamut of interpersonal relations that this developed. They could be exchanged directly for other goods, without the mediation of money, within a circuit of gifts and reciprocal obligations.³⁴

31 Gentile, “Discorsi sulle fazioni”, pp. 385–388.

32 Giorgio Politi, *La società cremonese nella prima età spagnola* (Milan, 2002), pp. 248–251.

33 Marco Gentile, “Una mattinata a Parma. Per la storia dello *charivari* in ambiente urbano nel Quattrocento”, in *Medioevo dei poteri*, pp. 337–346.

34 Germano Maifreda, “Culture popolari e culture dello scambio in età preindustriale: idee per una ricerca”, *Studi storici Luigi Simeoni* 56 (2006), 295–332; Michela Barbot, “Il valore

The holders, lay and ecclesiastic, of the largest patrimonies of fixed property did not treat them exclusively as sources of income. For example, the episcopal church of Como in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, granting lands and rights in fief, maintained a prestigious circle of vassals of aristocratic extraction, from whom it asked for little in exchange. The Fabbrica of the cathedral of Milan in the early modern period, through the lease of many houses which it owned in the city, strengthened links with members of the corporations active in the productive and commercial sectors most interested in the activities of that ecclesiastical entity. Local lords, to guarantee a “treasury” of devoted “friends” rather than of cash, could offer peasants grants of land on favourable terms. Some rural communes distributed among their inhabitants a myriad of scraps of land, with very advantageous contracts, designed more to sustain the family economy than to maximise profits to the public coffers. The patrimonies of pious institutions—which also acted as guarantors of credit at easy rates—confraternities or rural parishes, over which the local community often succeeded in exercising some control, were managed in not dissimilar ways.³⁵

Individuals were prompted to establish relations with entities and with other people not inspired solely by their own advantage, nor regulated exclusively by contract, inasmuch as it was a demonstration of the free will of the parties, but open to consideration of their social links. The rigid prescriptions of corporations, of urban and rural communities or of the state, which intervened in the detail of prices and the quality of products and in the conduct of artisan businesses, mediated economic competition, seeking to subordinate personal interest to that of the craft, the city or the *bonum commune* in general. The corporations, furthermore, constituted themselves as true communities of work, which not only moderated competition or helped members in difficulties but, for example, obliged their members to rally round the widows of deceased colleagues, and to pray for their salvation.³⁶

economico degli oggetti di lusso nella corte viscontea e sforzesca”, in *Oro dai Visconti agli Sforza. Smalti e oreficeria nel ducato di Milano* (Milan, 2012), pp. 79–85.

35 Roberto Greci, *Parma medievale. Economia e società nel Parmense dal Tre al Quattrocento* (Parma, 1992), pp. 113–160; Massimo Della Misericordia, *La disciplina contrattata. Vescovi e vassalli tra Como e le Alpi nel tardo Medioevo* (Milan, 2000); Marco Gentile, “La formazione del dominio dei Rossi tra XIV e XV secolo”, in *Le signorie dei Rossi*, pp. 23–55, pp. 32–36; Michela Barbot, *Le architetture della vita quotidiana. Pratiche abitative e scambi immobiliari nella Milano d’età moderna* (Venice, 2008); *La gestione delle risorse collettive. Italia settentrionale, secoli XII–XVIII*, eds Guido Alfani and Riccardo Rao (Milan, 2011).

36 Renata Crotti, *Economia e strutture corporative tra medioevo ed età moderna. Il caso pavese* (Milan, 2005).

Agricultural customs, among other things, obliged the proprietor to respect the rights of collective pasture in the winter months on their lands, disciplined working relations, blocked the individual from making innovations that assured advantages to him to the detriment of his neighbours. The statutes of the communities—that established the calendar of agricultural activities, regulated the appropriation and colonization of uncultivated lands, instituted various protective measures for woodland, pasture, meadow, and fields, and safeguarded the boundaries between farms—inscribed an ideal order in time (in the cycle of the seasons) and in space (the soil of family and collective properties). The aim was to avoid conflict, always threatening to flare up between neighbours, or between peasants and shepherds; the outcome was the institution of a natural landscape that was also an environment of regulated coexistence.³⁷

If economic transactions constructed social links, on the other hand local institutions and less formal groups sought to orient the circulation of goods and mobility of people to make themselves privileged circuits of exchange, acquiring greater solidity and distinguishing themselves from others. An economy so conditioned by a corporative matrix was inevitably connected to an exclusive model of citizenship and the “*bene comune*” was itself conceived in particular terms, a factor of cohesion of a socio-political environment however delimited, whether it was as extensive as the regional state or as restricted as the territory of a village. Wishing to alienate a piece of land or borrow some money, for example, the individual often turned in the first instance, perhaps by virtue of a prescriptive norm, to relatives, neighbours or members of the same faction. Rural communities strictly regulated access to woods and pastures, to the auctioning of inns and so on; sometimes they went so far as to exclude completely foreigners and privileged persons who, as nobles or citizens, were not part of the collectivity, from sharing in local resources.³⁸ The same applied to choices of residence, if in Milan in the sixteenth and seventeenth

37 Massimo Della Misericordia, “Consuetudine, contratto, lucro individuale, uso domestico. Una riflessione sugli ideali economici a confronto nelle vertenze per le risorse del territorio alpino alla fine del medioevo”, in *The languages of the political society*, pp. 395–428; *Idem*, “I confini dell’economia. Dividere le risorse e delimitare il possesso nella montagna lombarda del tardo medioevo”, in *Nell’età di Pandolfo Malatesta signore a Bergamo, Brescia e Fano agli inizi del Quattrocento*, eds Giorgio Chittolini, Elisabetta Conti and Maria Nadia Covini (Brescia, 2012), pp. 241–324.

38 Raul Merzario, *Il paese stretto. Strategie matrimoniali nella diocesi di Como. Secoli XVI–XVIII* (Turin, 1981); Alma Poloni, “*Ista familia de Fine audacissima, presumptuosa et litigiosa ac rixosa*”. Una lite tra la comunità di Onore e i da Fino nella Val Seriana superiore degli anni ‘60 del Quattrocento (Fino del Monte, 2009); Massimo Della Misericordia, *I confini dei*

centuries the neighbourhood contributed to consolidating relations of business and among those exercising the same trade.³⁹

The revenues of communities were employed to reinforce such cohesion, in some cases to cover fiscal obligations. State taxation, in fact, did not fall on the individual, but on territorial bodies. The collective responsibility imposed by the central authorities in this way increased the vigour of local institutions, because these could deal with the exactions, in part redistributing the burdens among the families, in part directly, with the communal revenues.

Other parts of the surplus income of the communes of villages or townships were redistributed in favour of all the inhabitants or destined to alms for the poor, ever more frequently directing them for preference, from the end of the Middle Ages, to the needy of the locality. Relief could be offered in various ways. On the occasion of the feast of the patron saint or the major solemnities of the liturgical year, of the funerary commemoration of a benefactor, at the stations of the processions that traversed the territory of the parish, wine and food were distributed to the poor or to all those present. Foundlings were maintained and help in money given to invalids. More systematic interventions were the foundation, support, and hence control of hospitals, grain banks and *monti di pietà* (created in the cities and in the middling and large centres of the countryside from the late fifteenth century to assure credit on easy terms, food and seed to the members of the community).⁴⁰ Now the financial reserves that provided alms could be constituted or incremented by individual legacies; sometimes the resources accumulated over the centuries were employed to set up community credit institutions; on the other hand, the communities themselves could depend on money lent by pious institutions such as confraternities. It is evident that, in the form of a festivity where food was shared, of a charitable provision or a grant of credit, a flow of resources was continually put into circulation and at the same time, if possible, jealously retained within the community, involving its members and its institutions in an inextricable network of interdependence.⁴¹

mercati. Territori, istituzioni comunitarie e spazi economici nella montagna lombarda del tardo medioevo (Morbegno, 2013).

39 Stefano D'Amico, *Le contrade e la città. Sistema produttivo e spazio urbano a Milano fra Cinque e Seicento* (Milan, 1994).

40 *Il credito e la carità*, 11, *Monti di pietà del territorio lombardo in età moderna*, ed. Daniele Montanari (Milan, 2001).

41 Emanuele C. Colombo and Marco Dotti, *Oikonomia urbana. Uno spaccato di Lodi in età moderna (secoli XVII–XVIII)* (Milan, 2011); Matteo Di Tullio, *La ricchezza delle comunità. Guerra, risorse e cooperazione nella Geradadda del Cinquecento* (Venice, 2011), pp. 135–166.

If the economic object could not be reduced to a mere material quantity, but incorporated the relations between men and women and their responsibilities to the collective, there follows another cultural feature of the pre-capitalist age. To be and to have, which modern rationality contrasts, were instead, in the values and behaviours of these centuries, reciprocally linked. All this is valid for individuals: the patrimony was spoken of as a person's very blood, a true projection of the self. In turn, the family, especially the aristocratic lineage, identified itself with the property: to defend it was a matter of honour, to pass it on a question of identity. Succession to the ancestral patrimony, at the end of the Middle Ages normally divided among all the male descendants, then concentrated for preference in the hands of a few, if not of a sole heir, served to select, within the splintered group linked by blood, those who were recognized as relations, and to reinforce the role of the men. The bonds of inalienability (*fedecompresso*), which from the sixteenth century more often burdened heirs, rendered fixed property the meta-temporal legacy of past generations. Some possessions surrounded by special prestige—for example, a fief granted by a bishop—could be kept undivided even by relatives who in other ways lived separate lives, making them the anchorage of the lineage's cohesion and of the memory of its continuity. The fulcrum of family property was the residence: distinguished by coats of arms placed on the portals and the windows, to show the identity of the inhabitants and to protect them with their symbolic force, it was safeguarded by particular juridical immunities, so that a physical threat brought up to the threshold by an outsider could be repulsed by any means. For this reason, family and house were terms used as synonyms, and enemies were those who, metaphorically, wished to destroy the family to its foundations and, concretely, manifested their wish in material destruction (of castles, for instance).⁴²

Communities identified just as closely with their common property. There were communal palaces, houses of rural communities, of confraternities and corporations, where, therefore, an abstract subject resided. Community resources furnished a common dish for the inhabitants, the legitimate bread and wine of charity, but also the illegitimate embezzlement. "Devouring the commune", in fact, was the recurrent metaphorical expression used to denounce those who, vested with the responsibilities of government, profited personally from what

42 Maria Carla Zorzoli, "Della famiglia e del suo patrimonio: riflessioni sull'uso del fedecompresso in Lombardia tra Cinque e Seicento", in *Marriage, Property and Succession*, ed. Lloyd Bonfield (Berlin, 1992), pp. 155–213; Letizia Arcangeli, "Piccoli signori lombardi e potenze grosse", in *I linguaggi politici*, pp. 409–443; Chiara Porqueddu, *Il patriziato pavese in età spagnola. Ruoli familiari, stile di vita, economia* (Milan, 2012).

belonged to everyone. If it is considered that forests and pastures were not only what the collectivity *had*, but intrinsic to what it *was*, the ferocity with which boundaries, patrimonial interests, and hence the collective self, were defended against outsiders can be better understood. To the point that in 1517, in the course of a phase of acute conflict between two communities which had for centuries disputed possession of Monte Negrino, an inhabitant of the Val di Scalve was taken to Borno, in Valcamonica, and killed as if in a sacrificial rite (“and there they sacrificed him for the commune”).⁴³

A Region of Early Modern Italy

Without doubt, many of the aspects considered here could be extended to Italy in general and to the whole of medieval and proto-modern Europe. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile discussing them with regard to a region for which historians have emphasized the precocious and notable urban expansion, economic development and a general dynamism that certainly, as will be seen, affected the religion of the people, and political and economic relations, but had to contend with other traditions. In the second place, I do not think identification of some regional characteristics should be renounced.

Early modern Lombardy was the location of a particularly intensive cultural circulation, that allowed even apparently minor subjects to make their voices heard. In the last centuries of the Middle Ages village and township communities experienced impressive social and institutional development. Contemporaneously, confraternities and (mostly in the cities) corporations were constituted. Peasants, artisans and minor notables could, therefore, affect the redistribution of resources and social relations, in accordance with their own values. They proposed, to some effect, their own conceptions of political loyalty to signorial, urban and state powers. Thanks to communities having legal rights of patronage over religious institutions, a practice more widespread in this region than elsewhere, the faithful built churches to suit their own devotion and practised a Christianity mingled with the memory of the family and the celebration of the integrity of the community. In the same period local traditions (*usus, mores, consuetudines*) were consolidated, in agricultural and pastoral work, production and commerce, as well as festive events, following their traces, making the associative life of each community distinct.

43 Giacomo Goldaniga, *La secolare contesa del Monte Negrino tra scalvini e bornesi (sec. VIII–XVII)* (Borno, 1989), p. 41.

To contemporaries such as Niccolò Machiavelli, the culture of an aristocracy wedded to its castles appeared robust, less domesticated than in other regions of Italy by urban “civilization” (as in the Veneto or Tuscany), more rooted in the reality of the periphery.⁴⁴

A dialectic, made up of solidarities and conflicts, in any case very lively, conferred a peculiar integrity on local environments. On the political plane, in the course of the fifteenth century the constitution of the dominion evolved towards the stabilization and legitimization of feudal powers, the autonomy of townships and valley communities, and so on, recognizing or tolerating *de facto* the existence of factions as well: one of the most pluralistic structures of any of the Italian states of the *ancien régime*. On the ceremonial plane, Baldassare Castiglione, writing about the Italian nobility in *Il libro del Cortegiano* (1528), pointed out a distinctive feature of the “Lombard country”, the “familiarity” of gentlemen with peasants, recognizing this in customs that have been singled out here as workshops of social relations, such as that of young people from different classes playing, fighting and dancing together at festivals (II, x). Perhaps because of these political, economic and festive customs, the inhabitants of Voghera found inexplicable the distant behaviour of the French feudatory who, after the conquest of Louis XII (1499–1500), refused their gifts and did not speak to their representatives.⁴⁵

It might be significant that Milan, other Lombard cities and the authorities of the state marked themselves out in northern and central Italy by their tardy and prudent introduction of sumptuary laws. With such legislation communes and states disciplined the public display of luxury, forbidding ostentation in clothing and jewellery, besides distinguishing the various categories, privileged and disreputable, on the basis of what they could properly wear, defining a system of legitimate signals of the position of each. They also prohibited what were held to be excessive magnificence and too numerous gatherings at baptisms, weddings, funerals, and banquets, and the most costly presents that were exchanged on such occasions. This was a profound interference in the competition between social groups, in the mechanisms of ritual reproduction of the family and of the cultivation of friendship. This would confirm that the *signori* of Milan and the urban authorities of the region had left greater liberty

44 Letizia Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia. Ricerche sull'aristocrazia padana del Rinascimento* (Milan, 2003).

45 Enrico Roveda, “Un generale francese al governo di un feudo lombardo: Ligny e Voghera”, in *Milano e Luigi XII. Ricerche sul primo dominio francese in Lombardia (1499–1512)*, ed. Letizia Arcangeli (Milan, 2002), pp. 107–140.

to the dynamism of social roles and their display, and offered a fuller ceremonial citizenship to groups such as the family, the nobility, and clientele.⁴⁶

Conflicts and Changes

As peculiar to Lombardy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, was the setting up of determined programmes of political and above all ecclesiastical government that were not always reconcilable with the cultures discussed here. Given the vitality that the latter had acquired at the end of the Middle Ages, when a comunitarian and local self-awareness that had previously been less clear came to maturity, an acute conflict was born.

I do not wish to propose here a schematic or unilinear interpretation of the historical dialectic. In the first place, cultural change is a complex process, rich in ambivalence. One aspect to be borne in mind, is that in the later Middle Ages there was a clear growth in schooling and the techniques of production of documents by community institutions became more widespread and functional. Writing was not only a rational technique to fix political procedures, but also a symbolic resource to stylize the ideal order of reality. In notarial lists of participants in assemblies of heads of households and community councils, in different local contexts, names follow one another sometimes without order, sometimes ordered by family, by neighbourhood, by prestige, by gender of individuals. They were linked by braces or gathered in panels to make the relationships evident. Dispositions on paper, that is, showed the position of individuals, in relation to one another and within the collectivity.

The self-identification of the individual with the community might have become less empathic between the medieval and early modern periods (as suggested by, among other things, the disappearance of personal names identical to the name of the community of residence); self-identification with factions was the object of a pounding political and moral polemic. But at the same time, symbolic identification with family and social class became stronger.

In the second place, it is not possible to see tendencies normally considered modernizing, in the direction of “disenchantment” and atomization, as emanating only from above or outside; they in fact appear to have been operative in local societies as well. In the same contexts there lived together and confronted one another lords of castles who treated the land as an asset with

46 Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, “Le leggi suntuarie”, in *Storia d'Italia. Annali*, 19, *La moda*, eds Carlo M. Belfanti and Fabio Giusberti (Turin, 2003), pp. 185–220, pp. 199–202 (with reference to the classic study of Ettore Verga).

which to construct personal relations, and communities bent on safeguarding social cohesion before income on one side, and on the other, townsmen or aristocrats interested in deriving the greatest profit possible from their peasants and debtors. To rural environments, where community and family ties aroused profound feelings of affiliation (which in the valleys of the Alpine foothills were not eroded even by transformations brought about by important developments in the proto-modern manufacturing economy), can be juxtaposed countrysides, such as those of Como or the lower Milanese, where at the end of the Middle Ages social isolation of the individual was already accentuated.⁴⁷

In any case, it is evident that the most clearly legible and persistent dissensions were triggered by projects of a political and religious nature that had directly attacked the solidity and legitimacy of local cultures.

From the late twelfth century, dominion was exercised by a dynasty that, without aspiring to an impossible cultural homogenization of the region, conditioned the selection of the languages admissible in political relations, contributing to the promotion of an aristocratic, courtly sensibility among officials and local, above all urban, elites. The *signori* of Milan and their agents showed intolerance of the uncontrolled passions aroused by noble conflicts and factional loyalties, discredited in a language borrowed from the intransigent preaching of Observant Franciscans. The public life of communities appeared, in their moralistic evaluations, disfigured by rancour between neighbours and a proud bearing towards their governors. Large assemblies of men, calling for a direct audience with the prince or his representatives for their demands, were judged inopportune, their tumultuous rallying to the *rumor* to defend their own property and rights, subversive. Participative experiences and rooted forms of political self-identification were thus discredited in the light of good political manners (*honestà*), that is, the *habitus* of subjection and self-control that the princely regime wished to inculcate. To the detriment of collectivities, relatively restricted elites, educated in courtly ways, and the single individual with the right personal attributes of prestige and credibility, were preferred as political interlocutors.

As for the relationship of the Catholic hierarchies to the faithful, recent research is inclined to tone down the too clear-cut contrast between the pre- and post-Tridentine eras. The Church of the late sixteenth century and especially of the seventeenth century offered the dominant classes many

47 Vittorio Beonio-Brocchieri, "Piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo". *Famiglie e mestieri nel Ducato di Milano in età spagnola* (Milan, 2000); Federico Del Tredici, "Loci, comuni, homines. Il linguaggio della bassa pianura milanese nella prima metà del Quattrocento", in *I linguaggi politici*, pp. 269–292.

instruments to continue to express their distinction, new spaces and occasions for community displays, thanks to ceremonies that aroused the emotions. In processions, the orders of the city took their places and sexual roles were assigned; festivals gave the sociability of the confraternity the means to be publicly displayed.

On the other hand, it has been confirmed that the particularly rigorous interpretation of Catholic reform by Carlo Borromeo, which influenced its reception in Lombardy, had a notable impact on the rites of integration and regeneration of rural and urban societies.⁴⁸ Bishops and parish priests sought to forbid, at least on feast days, dances and competitive games (such as that of *pallone* (football), an entertainment dear to the nobles of the Milanese countryside, on the church squares), which were important occasions to express or harmonize the tensions within local society. The sociability of dances, of games, of the inn was spoken of as “diabolical schools”, as “conventicles”, as though they were structured aggregations, analogous to the confraternities (*scuole*) (but with diametrically opposed purposes) or to seditious associations (*conventicoli*).⁴⁹ The quests with which lay people made the rounds of all the houses in the village to ask for foodstuffs to redistribute and consume collectively, were decried as pretexts for drunkenness. Carnival masquerades became “inventions of the devil”.⁵⁰ After the Council, in this instance more rapidly in Lombardy than elsewhere, the context of baptism was changed: the number of godfathers and godmothers was reduced to two and restraint in the secular display of banquets was encouraged. The Christian sacrament should no longer be accompanied by the social initiation of the baby, under the tutelage of relatives, friends and patrons.⁵¹

There was little tolerance for family or community emblems that permitted the identification of the benefactor with the church or chapel he had founded, a prolongation of his presence among the living. Another visible trace inscribed by the dead in churches had to become fainter: Carlo Borromeo

48 Danilo Zardin, *Carlo Borromeo. Cultura, santità, governo* (Milan, 2010), pp. 167–169.

49 Danilo Zardin, *Riforma cattolica e resistenze nobiliari nella diocesi di Carlo Borromeo* (Milan, 1984).

50 Caludio Bernardi and Annamaria Cascetta, “Dai ‘profani tripudi’ alla ‘religiosa magnificenza’: la ricostruzione del sistema cerimoniale nella Milano borromaica”, in *Carlo Borromeo e l’opera della “grande riforma”. Cultura, religione e arti nella Milano del pieno Cinquecento*, eds Franco Buzzi and Danilo Zardin (Milan, 1997), pp. 227–240. Compare Gianvittorio Signorotto, *Milano sacra. Organizzazione del culto e consenso tra XVI e XVIII secolo*, in *Milano e il suo territorio*, eds Franco Della Peruta, Roberto Leydi and Angelo Stella (Milan, 1985), pp. 581–629.

51 Guido Alfani, *Padri, padrini, patroni. La parentela spirituale nella storia* (Venice, 2006).

would have liked to expel all lay burials from them, but the continuators of his work took a softer line, allowing burial within the sacred edifices. In any case, in the Lombard dioceses, with outcomes that were undoubtedly more radical than in other regions of Italy, burials could only be marked by a covering stone, while protruding sarcophagi, any form of monumental elaboration of the tomb and the sculptured likeness of the deceased, the stone body that he had left on earth, were banned. Ecclesiastics themselves worked to put an end to the distributions of food to the poor in churches, cemeteries, or at the stopping-points of processions, and in general they degraded to simple revels the rites of communion staged by communes or confraternities, intended to integrate the collectivity in remembering the dead who continued to nourish it with their legacies. Not by chance the Council of Trent has remained, in popular memory, the mythical term after which the dead have ceased to reappear in the land of the living.

The matter of the Guelf and Ghibelline Maydays testified to the intensification of political and ecclesiastical pressure. Already in 1480 the Sforza commissioner of Cremona had to reassure the central authorities that no one had associated the trees planted on the first of May with the names of the parties. In 1579 the provincial synod convoked by Carlo Borromeo forbade the custom because it was a cause of enmities and violence, substituting a cross for the tree at the centre of the rite. In the Visconti lands that surrendered to Venice in the 1420s there were analogous developments. At Brescia the state official immediately combated a "partisan rite", "diabolical" and "pagan", as it was called, mingling political reasons and the rhetoric of the preaching friars. In the seventeenth century in Valcamonica spring was still greeted by planting trees, but now the standards of the republic of Venice had replaced those of the factions.⁵² A ceremony that wished to divide the community in order to renew the vigour that came from the friction of opposites, was seen exclusively as fomenting hatred, and neutralized by the unifying symbols of the state or the Christian faith.

The state and ecclesiastical authorities, making many cultural contents that had long been shared slide towards illegitimacy, emphasized their own alterity. The officials sent to the periphery of the Sforza dominion who delegitimated the mechanisms of comunitarian political decision-making, adherence to factions, the forms of local conflict, felt themselves exiles in "vile" habitats, among litigious and rebellious "barbarians". From the next century, in ecclesiastical

52 See above, note 31, and Andrea Apostoli, "Feste e baratteria per un nuovo regime. Disposizioni e dibattiti consiliari a Brescia nei primi anni di dominio veneziano", *Ludica* 9 (2003), 9–13 (with reference to the work of Gregorio Brunelli).

sources, too—in trials, pastoral visits, the reports of missionaries—funeral and festive rites, as well as a wider system of beliefs, were turned into folklore, at the time when they were being harshly combated. These lay and ecclesiastical writings are, in a way, the first ethnographies of the region. In the track of an older urban tradition, that made of the peasant—cunning, but awkward and ignorant—the butt of satire, they put an unbridgeable distance between the writer and the world of the peasant. They might have been nourished by the fear of subversive or unorthodox behaviours, or, ever more often over the centuries, by condescending superiority and irony towards “ridiculous” words and gestures, passed down by “silly women”, confined to a different area of civilization, an attitude perpetuated in the reports of the Napoleonic functionaries on the habits and customs of their prefectures.⁵³ Certainly, such a civilization was not erased, but changed and was manifested in new ways, yet keeping its subordinate position. If the social and economic revolution brought about by the great processes of urbanization and industrialization in a later period to that discussed here are added, it is easy to understand why researchers who in the 1970s approached a rural world in irreversible transformation had the feeling of rediscovering the religion, the narratives, the songs, the social customs and the techniques of work of “another Lombardy”, a submerged Lombardy.⁵⁴

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53 Giovanni Tassoni, *Arte e tradizioni popolari. Le inchieste napoleoniche sui costumi e le tradizioni nel Regno Italico* (Bellinzona, 1973).

54 *L'altra Lombardia. Immagini della cultura contadina e popolare* (Milan, 1974).

The Jews: Institutions, Economy, and Society

Germano Maifreda

The history of the Jews within the Milanese State in the Early Modern Era has not as yet been the subject of systematic research. The extensive collection of documents edited by Shlomo Simonsohn, published between 1982 and 1986, is an excellent starting point for a study of this kind.¹ Subsequent historiography has employed the contents of this extremely rich collection only episodically, despite the many aspects of Jewish life on which the volumes may enlighten us: legal, economic, social, cultural, and religious; and on the relations between Jews and Christians in the State from the late Middle Ages to the Early Modern Age. For the purposes of this collection, this essay will also be limited to only a small section of the documentation collected by Simonsohn, whilst at the same time providing a brief reconsideration of the existing bibliography.

Jews and Dukes in the Visconti and Sforza Eras

In the core centuries of the Middle Ages, most Italian Jews lived in urban centres in the Centre and South of the Italian peninsula. Here, for historical reasons that are still being discussed, their main activities were commercial brokering and pawn brokering.² Over the fourteenth century, due to the increased need

¹ *A Documentary History of the Jews in Italy. The Jews in the Duchy of Milan*, ed. Shlomo Simonsohn (Jerusalem, 1982–1986), 4 volumes. Henceforth cited with the abbreviation S followed by the volume number and the document number. On the preparation criteria of the collection cf. Shlomo Simonsohn, “Metodologia e risultati della ricerca per ‘The Jews in the Duchy of Milan’”, *La Rassegna Mensile di Israel*, 52 (1987), pp. 335–344.

² A recent reconsideration of the problem, that dedicates much space to the case of Italy, is Michael Toch, *The Economic History of European Jews. Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2012). Although the results of new research have been, as Derek Penslar has written, “a minimizing of Jewish economic exceptionalism and a depiction of Jews as trading people”, we cannot fail to note that “Jewish economic difference remained prominent in Jewish self-consciousness”, and that “signs of Jewish economic uniqueness remain and demand explanation”: see his *Foreword* in G. Reuveni, S. Wobick-Segev (eds), *The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life* (New York-Oxford, 2010), pp. vii–x, p. vii. On the defining role of the economy in upholding a sense

for credit on the part of local government institutions, princes, and populations, and linked to the more general economic and political transformations of the age, a notable flux of migration of Jewish people took place from the Centre and South towards the North of the peninsula. Jewish presence thus increased especially in Romagna and in the areas around Ferrara, as well as Mantua, Verona, and Milan. In the inhabited areas that correspond to the Lombardy of today, Jewish people from the Italian peninsula in the fourteenth century were probably, in the Late Middle Ages, fewer than Jews of French and German origin. French and German Jews had moved South following expulsions that had taken place in previous centuries and in the fourteenth century itself, seeing the Italian peninsula as socially and economically dynamic and also relatively tolerant.³

Historical information on the Jewish presence in the Middle Ages within the boundaries of what was to become the State of Milan in the Modern Age, are particularly scarce. The Jewish presence in Pavia dates back to around the eighth century, with probably interruptions from the twelfth to the fourteenth century due to persecution and forced conversions. A synagogue probably existed in Milan from the fourth century AD, however currently not enough significant evidence exists to ascertain the continuous presence of Jewish communities in the Milanese area over the following centuries. What is more, in the second half of the seventh century the Jews living in Lombardy were persecuted by the Catholic Longobard king Perctarit, who, it seems, did not bring about the complete destruction of the existing communities. Historians consider unreliable the news that in 1162 Milanese Jews had betrayed the

of Jewish distinctiveness see also Derek Penslar's *Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2001). Recent historiography, as shown by Toch, no longer considers the argument of legal restrictions on Jewish economic activities, if taken individually, a compelling explanation of Jews' occupational structure during the ancient and medieval period: see M. Toch, 'The Jews in Europe, 500–1500', in P. Fouracre (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 547–70; 'Economic Activities of German Jews in the Middle Ages', in M. Toch (ed.), *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Juden: Fragen und Einschätzungen* (Munich, 2008), pp. 181–210; M. Botticini, Z. Eckstein, *How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70–1942* (Princeton–Oxford, 2012), pp. 52ff. On Early Modern Italy see initially M. Romani, *Le conseguenze economiche di un'appartenenza imperfetta*, in M. Romani, E. Traniello (eds), *Gli ebrei nell'Italia centro settentrionale fra tardo Medioevo ed età moderna (secoli XV–XVIII)*, special issue of *Cheiron*, 57–58 (2012), pp. 47–73.

3 On the history of European Jews in the Middle Ages, a starting place is Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross. The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1994) and *The Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries). Proceedings of the international Symposium held at Speyer, 20–25 October 2002*, ed. Christoph Cluse (Tübingen, 2004).

city and sided with Frederick I Barbarossa, reported by the fifteenth century chronicler Giovanni Pietro Cagnola, which would have provided evidence of a Jewish presence in Milan at that time. A more reliable source can be found in the instructions sent to the faithful of Lombardy by pope Innocent III in 1200 that hints at the presence of Jewish money lenders and at the correlated moratoria of debts owed by Christians to them. This document, therefore, attests to the unequivocal presence of Jews in Milan in the period under consideration.

A stable community of Jews from the German area is attested to in surviving documentation dating to 1387, when Giangaleazzo Visconti, first duke of Milan, drew up a contract for the creation of a lending bank in Pavia, following the model of the *condotta*. The Visconti took, and were to continue to take, advantage of financial collaboration with the Jews in many of the centres that came under their political influence for greater or lesser periods of time: Perugia, Assisi, Siena, Pisa, Bologna, Reggio Emilia, Faenza, and Forlì. The *condotta* was a sort of agreement between the authorities and the brokers that allowed the Jews to lend money on pledge to the population or to the authorities themselves, Princes included, at a determined interest rate. This agreement regulated the length of time goods were held and also the eventual sale of pawned goods, in addition to guaranteeing the money lenders a permit of residence within a given area and freedom of worship, often substantiated by a dispensation from the mandatory wearing of the distinctive symbol, sanctioned by some canonical laws, including those issued at the end of the IV Lateran Council in 1215. All the concessions that these agreements provided were guaranteed for a limited number of years, and were, therefore, subject to periodic renewal. It was through these *condotte* that many Italian Jews, in individual family units or in groups, moved into the North of the peninsula and into the Milanese area as early as the last decade of the fourteenth century, mixing with Jewish families from beyond the Alps and practicing pawn brokering.⁴

4 The fundamentally important study by Attilio Milano remains essential, Attilio Milano, *Storia degli ebrei in Italia* (Turin, 1992), pp. 204–205, first edition in 1963. For a general bibliography on the history of the Jews in the State of Milan in the medieval and Modern ages see this work and the “List of Short References and Bibliography” published in S I, pp. L–LIX. Cf. also Shlomo Simonsohn, *Introduction*, in S I, pp. XIII–XLIX; Vittore Colorni, *Gli ebrei nei territori italiani a nord di Roma dal 568 agli inizi del secolo XIII*, in *Gli ebrei nell’alto Medioevo* (Spoleto, 1980), pp. 241–309, now in Id., *Judaica minora. Saggi sulla storia dell’ebraismo italiano dall’antichità all’età moderna* (Milan, 1983); Shlomo Simonsohn, *La condizione giuridica degli ebrei nell’Italia centrale e settentrionale (secoli XII–XVI)*, in *Storia d’Italia. Annali 11. Gli ebrei in Italia*, ed. Corrado Vivanti, I. *Dall’alto Medioevo all’età dei ghetti* (Turin, 1996), pp. 95–119, pp. 97–106; Michele Luzzati, *Banchi e insediamenti ebraici nell’Italia centro-settentrionale fra tardo Medioevo e inizi dell’Età moderna*, ivi, pp. 183–235, pp. 183 e 204–208; David Cassuto, *La*

By the fifteenth century the presence of Jews within the confines of the future state of Milan were statistically significant and well distributed. Documentation attests to Jewish communities in Pavia (in the city and in Arena Po, Broni, Casteggio, Castelnovetto, Mortara, Palestro, Santa Giulietta, Sartirana, Lomellina, and Varzi), in Cremona (in the city and in Bordolano, Casalmaggiore, Castelleone, Montodine, Piadena, Pizzighettone, Rivolta d'Adda, Romanengo, San Giovanni in Croce, Soncino, Vailate, and Vescovato), in Lodi, in Como (Annone Brianza, Bregnano, Cantù, Gravedona, and Mandello al Lario), in Varese (in Gallarate), in Vegevano and in Voghera. Jewish people were not officially allowed to reside in the city of Milan, however communities were established in the surrounding areas: Abbiategrasso, Cassano d'Adda, Castelnuovo Bocca d'Adda, Legnano, Melegnano, Melzo, Monza, Mulazzano, Noviglio, San Colombano al Lambro and Trezzo sull'Adda. Despite the official ban in Milan, some Jews did live there, officially for brief business sojourns. In the majority of localities that now fall under the region of Piedmont but were part of the State of Milan in the seventeenth century, including Arona, Novara, and Tortona, it is not possible to trace a stable Jewish presence until the late fifteenth century to early sixteenth century. The only exception within this area can be found in Alessandria, in which the Jewish population was already established by the 1420s. In many of the above mentioned locations, Jews undertook small scale pawn brokering activities. Their integration into local societies, which, as we shall see, brought with it the endurance of significant fiscal burden, allowed Jewish people to acquire increased negotiating power with secular and ecclesiastical authorities. As early as March 1460, during the negotiations between pope Pius II and Francesco Sforza concerning *vigesima* (a tax of one twentieth of possessions) that the pontiff demanded from the Jews in order to finance the crusade against the Turks, the Duke instructed his ambassador in the Apostolic See to remind the Pope 'che molti dinari de cristiani sono in mano a li judei, cum quo advertendum est, perché volere gravare dicti Zudei a pagare più del xxmo de li proventi loro faria trovare molti e inferniti homeni di malissima voglia, sì che diligenter considerandum est ne forse se facessero troppi malcontenti' [that a lot of Christian money is in the hands of the Jews, *cum quo advertendum est*, because to wish to burden said Jews with a payment of more than one twentieth of their income will make them

sinagoga in Italia, ivi, pp. 317–337, p. 323. On Pavia cf. Renata Segre, *Gli ebrei a Pavia*, in *Storia di Pavia*, vol. III, *Dal libero Comune alla fine del Principato indipendente, 1025–1535*, tome I, *Società, istituzioni, religione nell'età del Comune e della Signoria* (Milan, 1992), pp. 433–450.

highly unwilling men, hence *diligenter considerandum est* so that they [the Christians] may not be made too unhappy.⁵

According to some scholars, the multiplication of credit offered through pawn brokering by Jews over the fifteenth century, alongside the changing conditions of the economy in general and the credit structure in the late Middle Ages, caused the slump in interest rates officially applied through the *condotte* throughout the Central-Northern areas of the Italian peninsula. This interest rate plummeted from more than 80% in the thirteenth century to less than 10% in the sixteenth century.⁶ It must also be noted, however, that the documentation relevant to interest rates applied by Jews portrays a very variegated and irregular situation, at least in the territories governed by Milan throughout the various political and institutional periods. In 1501, for example, an Abraham Sacerdote signed a *condotta* granted by the city of Alessandria which gave him exclusivity of lending in the city with an interest rate of 60% per annum. Again in 1533 the city council of Pavia attempted to take measures to prevent local Jews from applying interest rates over 40% per annum.⁷ Furthermore, it is impossible, over the course of these centuries, to speak of a free market in terms of pawn brokering, both because the system of *condotte* heavily influenced the legal framework within which the activity took place, creating situations of local monopoly or oligopoly, and also because the practice of money lending on pledge was strongly regulated and conditioned by the continuous intervention of local authorities instrumental in removing dangerous situations of conflict between Christians and Jews. In addition to various dispositions regarding their daily life and religious practices, these concessions periodically granted by the Dukes to Jews also included detailed regulations on the practice of brokering and the storage of pawned goods, in addition to measures that were to be taken in case of theft or loss.⁸ The institutional and political supervision of interest rates applied by Jews continued into the era of Spanish domination. There is proof that in 1548 the governor Ferrante Gonzaga ordered resident Jews to send representatives in order to discuss

5 Cf. the bibliography mentioned in the previous note also for the above mentioned geographical distribution; then, concerning the valuation of the fall in interest rates, see Ariel Toaff, "*Banchieri*" cristiani e "*prestatori*" ebrei?, in *Storia d'Italia. Annali n. Gli ebrei in Italia*, pp. 265–287, quotation from pp. 280–281.

6 Cf. A. Toaff, "*Banchieri*" cristiani e "*prestatori*" ebrei?. The system of *condotte* is well illustrated by Roberto Bonfil, *Gli ebrei nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Florence, 1991), pp. 75 onwards.

7 See respectively S 2/2302 and 2441.

8 Cf. for example the legislation contained in the renewal of privileges granted by duke Massimiliano Sforza on 8 April 1512, in S 2/2322.

complaints received by various cities with regard to high interest rates that had been applied. At the same time, the city of Cremona asked the governor to fix a maximum 25% rate for loans against pawned goods and 30% for loans without a pledge, which raised opposition from the Jewish money lenders; also in Lodi, attempts were made to fix a ceiling of 20%.⁹ Again in 1555 the royal Treasury paid the Jewish community via Michele Ottolengo 18% per annum interest on a loan of 16,000 lire, whilst the *comune* in Cremona paid individual Jewish money lenders interest at 15%.¹⁰

There is much documentary evidence demonstrating the ways in which the Milanese Dukes, from the second half of the fifteenth century, intervened in institutions and local societies in order to resolve disputes concerning the withholding of pawned goods by Jews, their redemption or their sale at auction, or their reuse. Pawned goods could indeed be used to guarantee loans granted from Christians to Jews should cash be needed immediately, for example in order to rapidly pay a tax or a fine imposed on them, or as a guarantee of their debts incurred by borrowers with regard to public authorities or the ducal Treasury. The internal activity of Jewish banks was, therefore, closely followed: both because these banks were sources of potential discord and conflict between local populations and the Jewish communities, and also because the pawned goods themselves represented a secure source of wealth from which the Dukes could extract fiscal benefits.¹¹ The city Councils could also redefine the content of the *condotte* and the conditions under which they were granted. For instance, in 1507, the *comune* of Pavia having established that one Jewish person offered better terms and lower interest rates than his fellow Jews who were already lending locally, entered into arbitration and redefined the existing privileges in order to facilitate access to credit for the *popolo minuto* and avoid potential disorder. Again in 1533, representatives of the *comune* of Pavia negotiated with local Jews for a reduction of the rates applied in their banks.¹² By 1538, the social and religious climate changed as a consequence of the increased circulation of Tridentine ideas of reform and the relaunch of

9 S 2/2559.

10 S 2/2939 and 2940. For a comprehensive overview of the problem of interest rates applied by Jews in the second half of the sixteenth century see Renata Segre, *Gli ebrei lombardi nell'età spagnola. Storia di un'espulsione* (Turin, 1973), pp. 8 onwards.

11 For cases of direct intervention of ducal, central, or local authorities, on the system of brokering in Milan in the fifteenth century cf. S 2/1658–1660–1671–1673.

12 S 2/2309 and 2317.

the Inquisition, the Senate of Milan decided that Jews were prohibited from accepting from Christians pawned goods that had ritualistic value.¹³

The system of *condotte* regulated the credit networks established by Jews minutely, at the same time creating direct competition between the money lenders and a defence against the possibility of monopolies forming. An emblematic example of this dynamic can be seen in the controversy that occurred in Piacenza in 1477, when a man named Isaac, son of Manasse, requested permission to open a bank in the city and the Jewish proprietors of existing banks protested to the town council by claiming they had exclusive rights in the city. In this instance the Dukes forced the local authorities to increase the number of Jewish banks in the city; an indication of the new conflict arising between central and peripheral authorities with regard to the regulation of the Jewish economic presence.¹⁴ Furthermore, the Dukes themselves, again seeking social accord, were able to take responsibility for resolving credit disputes that took place amongst Jews or between Jews and Christians. A Christian living in Lodi, in 1477, could therefore apply directly to the Prince in order to have a significant sum of money returned to him that was owed to him by the Jew Madio (Mair) and certified with 'scriptura ebrayca'. In the same year another Christian who owed 260 ducats to Manno di Pavia, a Jew, but who was not able to give the amount back, also received the help necessary through applying to the duke who intervened through the local podestà.¹⁵

Over the centuries bridging the medieval age and the early modern era, the legal *status* of Jews in Western Christendom was the result of an overlapping of legislative, religious, and cultural constructs over a long period. At this point it is necessary to briefly outline these constructs in order to provide a fuller understanding of the political and fiscal relations between Princes, public authorities, and Jewish people in the context of Milan. At the beginning of the third century, Jews became Roman citizens together with all the other inhabitants of the Empire, and during the High Middle Ages in Europe, they maintained a fundamentally egalitarian legal *status* within gentile society. The worsening of living conditions and the legal situation of Western European Jews occurred between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, following institutional changes in relations between the Pope and the Emperor, and the waves of plague that elicited accusations of ritual homicide and well poisoning by Christians, with subsequent massacres and expulsions of the Jews in large areas of central and northern Europe. In both secular and canonical normative output, the use of

¹³ S 2/2479.

¹⁴ Cf. S 2/1636 and 1663.

¹⁵ Cf. respectively S 2/1677 and 1678.

the category of *servus Camerae regis* to designate the statute of the Jews within a Christian context became wide spread. From a strictly legal perspective, this expression did not denote a condition of servitude of Jewish people, who, indeed, in the chapters released in some central and northern Italian cities, including the Duchy of Milan, were defined as no less than *cives* in some cases or who received the privileges of *ius civitatis*.

The term *servi Camerae regis* harks back to a very interesting path of legal and cultural construction centred around the concept of the slavery of the Jews found in the New Testament, in the writings of Paul, and also some Church Fathers who, in the twelfth century, had entered into theological and canonistic debate through Thomas Aquinas. These writings sustain that, since the Jews were condemned into perpetual slavery, governors could deal with Jewish possessions as if they were their own. This reasoning entered into the *Corpus iuris canonici* and made its way into various documents of local councils. In Southern Italy and in Sicily the category of *servi Camerae regis* was also assigned to Jews from Frederick II (1236) onwards, so that in Sicily Jews were included amongst those who had access to the privileges granted by the Crown, without making them equal to other citizens. The term was also applied many times in northern Italian territories that were part of the Empire or were imperial fiefs. The legal *status* of Jews was set as the category of *servus*, and, despite this status not always being explicit in the wording of legal documents after the Middle Ages, it continued to influence the legal and political understanding of the status of Jews in the Early Modern Era. This status was characterized, as frequently happened in the history of the Jews, by an inextricable mixture of discrimination, protection, and dependence. For as long as Jews were considered servants of popes, kings, and princes, they had the right of special protection that sovereigns could graciously accord to them, however, at the same time they were bound, in terms of personal dignity as well as economically and with regard to their assets, to the wishes of that same ruler, who, from a canonical point of view, had every right to disperse their money and their assets.¹⁶

It is essential to keep this legal and cultural construct in mind in order to understand the history of the relationships between Jews and both secular and ecclesiastical power over the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era. This is

¹⁶ For further in-depth reading, a starting point can be found in the bibliography accompanying the lemma *Servi Camerae Regis* in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. XIV (Jerusalem, 19743), p. 1188, and from the more recent discussion of David Abulafia, “*Nam iudei servi regis sunt, et semper fisco regio deputati*”: *The Jews in the Municipal Fuero of Teruel* (1176–7), in *Jews, Muslims and Christians In and Around the Crown of Aragon. Essays in Honour of Professor Elena Lourie*, ed. Harvey J. Hames (Leiden, 2004), pp. 97–126, pp. 103 onwards.

the case even in places in which Jews were described as *cives* and received protection and help from emperors, popes, and/or princes, such as Milan, Mantua, Pisa, and Rome. In these cities, Jewish people also benefitted from statutes that explicitly stated that it was the duty of judges to treat Jews and Christians with equality. In the Duchy of Milan in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, Jews were placed under the jurisdiction of the local podestà, and later, under the magistrate responsible for the Jews designated by the ducal proconsul. Criminal accusations could not be brought against Jewish people without the prior knowledge of the Duke. Again in Milan, a very rare Italian medieval appointment indeed can be identified: the appointment of a Jewish person as general magistrate for Jews in the region. The person appointed was the famous doctor Elia di Sabbato (Beer) from Fermo, who was confirmed in office by Filippo Maria Visconti with the function of being the only legal authority over Jewish people, with the power to exact the death penalty and whose sentences could only be overruled by the tribunal of the Duke himself. When Francesco Sforza decided to extend the system of *condotte* in the Duchy of Milan to more Jewish people, however, he had to obtain the blessing of Pope Nicholas V in January 1452. The request was granted on condition that the Duke observed all the canonical laws relating to the Jews, even the ones that were highly discriminatory.¹⁷

On the one hand, then, it can be argued that the legal condition of Jews in the Milanese state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was in some ways favourable to them, when compared to other areas in Italy and further afield. Shlomo Simonsohn has, for example, observed that this situation was 'unusual even for the comparative (though selective) liberalism shown by Princes of the Renaissance towards some of their Jewish subjects'. On the other hand, however, it must be remembered that the relationship between Jews and princes certainly did not dampen the threat posed by legal and social relations between Jews and the environment in which they lived and worked. Attilio Milano, in his fundamentally important work *Storia degli ebrei in Italia*, argued that 'both Francesco Sforza and his successors were generous in favours towards the Jews, and ready to support them, often against the general population and local

17 S. Simonsohn, *La condizione giuridica degli ebrei*, p. 115. The so-called 'general pardon' of the Jews, a papal bull that absolved Jews of their responsibility of all crimes committed up until the day of publication of the pardon, excluding only the most serious crimes, also became an integrated into the documents of privileges in Milan towards the middle of the fifteenth century: cf. *ivi*, p. 108.

comuni that had not altered their traditionally hostile attitude'.¹⁸ This reference is to cases such as Cremona, the Lombard city that had attracted the most Jews in the fifteenth century, and where, from 1466 to 1468, civil authorities petitioned Bianca Maria Visconti to put a stop to the entrance of more Jewish people into the city. Popular anti-Semitism, furthermore, led to periodic insurrections and attacks on Jews and the Jewish communities in Lombardy. The Jewish population of Milan, in fact, was continuously held in a sort of tension between the contrasting effects of the protection offered by the dukes on one side and the hostility of civil authorities and local populations on the other. What is more, over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the anti-Semitic and anti-usury preaching of some Franciscans increasingly served to foment local populations. In this respect, it is important to recall the episodes of Michele Carcano in Como in 1478 and Bernardino da Feltre in Parma in 1488 that led to the introduction of the local Monte di Pietà, alongside the particularly violent attacks again by Bernardino in 1493–1494 in Pavia, which produced the same outcome and caused violent anti-Semitic uprisings. In the sixteenth century the dukes still continued to issue, through their governors, as Massimiliano Sforza did in 1514, edicts for the protection of Jews over Holy Week, which ordered the vicars of the bishop not to support initiatives that were contrary to the privileges granted to the Jews by law. Massimiliano also wrote to the bishops periodically, as he did in 1515 to the ordinary in Lodi, in order to complain about the persecution of Jews following incitement by preachers, inviting civil councils to work more diligently to repress anti-Semitic turbulence.¹⁹

The attitudes of the Dukes of Milan towards the Jews were not always univocally benevolent. The era of Ludovico il Moro was particularly difficult in which, in 1488, there was an extraordinary trial against around forty Jews. They had been accused by a convert of possessing Hebrew books that contained passages offensive to Christianity and contempt for the Christian religion. Despite the mitigating intervention of Pope Innocent VIII, nine of the accused were condemned to death and the remainder were expelled from the Duchy and their assets confiscated; measures that were probably remitted following the payment of significant fines, which nonetheless did not protect Jewish assets from being seized or suspicious books from being burnt. An additional twenty eight Jewish people were condemned to various punishments and fined. The

18 The quotations are from S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, p. xviii and A. Milano, *Storia degli ebrei in Italia*, pp. 206–207, also for the facts reported below.

19 S 2/2345 and 2351. See also S. Simonsohn, *Alcune note sugli ebrei a Parma nel '400*, in *Studi sull'ebraismo italiano in memoria di Cecil Roth* (Rome, 1974), pp. 227–260.

outcomes of this trial convinced Ludovico il Moro that it would be opportune to expel Jews from the Duchy of Milan through a decree, dated 1490, which was not, however, entirely carried out. Many Jews were to later return and reside in the area, firstly during the Venetian occupation of Cremona, and later in the time of French domination. The trial proceedings from 1488 were published in their entirety and represent an important source for the economic, social, religious, and cultural history of Jewish presence in Lombardy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.²⁰

Another controversial aspect of the condition of Jews in the Duchy of Milan, as in most states at that time in Italy as elsewhere, can be seen in the oppressive fiscal regime to which they were subjected. This regime was the result of long-standing legal and cultural constructions that are far too numerous to even summarize in this essay.²¹ By the second half of the fifteenth century, individual Jews and their communities were subjected to decidedly higher burden in terms of tolls than their gentile counterparts. In the era of Francesco Sforza sanctions were imposed that Jewish money-lenders had to deposit an annual amount in the Duke's Treasury fixed at 2,500 *lire* in 1462 which had already risen to 20,000 *lire* by 1478. This was in a period in which overall ducal revenue had 'only' increased by 50%, in the difficult financial circumstances following the death of Francesco Sforza (1466), in which his successors were forced to sell rights of jurisdiction and some revenue on a number of territories and communities.²² The annual deposit paid by individual Jewish money-lenders amounted to 1% of ducal revenue in the 1480s, to which the annual tax paid by Jewish lenders to the *comuni* needed to be added.²³ To this figure a number of further local charges needs to be added. In Vigevano, for example, the Jewish community paid a large part of the expenses for the construction of the imposing fortress and for the dowry of Bianca Maria Sforza in advance, whilst at the same time paying the fees of the executioner who carried out criminal sentences, and financed the construction of a brothel.²⁴

20 See Anna Antoniazzi Villa, *Un processo contro gli ebrei nella Milano del 1488. Crescita e declino della comunità ebraica lombarda alla fine del Medioevo* (Bologna, 1985).

21 See, to begin with, the recent volume by Giacomo Todeschini, *Come Giuda. La gente comune e i giochi dell'economia all'inizio dell'epoca moderna* (Bologna, 2011).

22 Cf. Giorgio Chittolini, *Città, comunità e feudi negli Stati dell'Italia centro-settentrionale (XIV–XVI secolo)* (Milan, 1996), pp. 144–157.

23 A. Antoniazzi Villa, *Un processo contro gli ebrei nella Milano del 1488*, p. 54.

24 A. Milano, *Storia degli ebrei in Italia*, pp. 205–206.

The Government of Jewish *Universitates*

In the high Middle Ages the *condotte* and special statutes concerning the Jews were generally granted to individuals or to family groups in the Italian States, with the exception being the Papacy. From the late Middle Ages to the start of the Modern Age, Jewish communities began to be recognized by governing authorities as *universitates*, and as such were guaranteed a legal statute akin to those of Christian cooperatives of merchants or craftsmen.²⁵ In this way, Jewish communities began to benefit from specific legal rules and establishments, foremost amongst which was the rabbinic tribunal, a legal court that administered religious and civil law, including matters pertaining to marriage and separation from marriage as well as voluntary arbitration. Only exceptionally did governing authorities in the Italian peninsula allow Jews to retain margins of autonomous jurisdiction in penal matters, as was the case in Milan with Elia Beer, and elsewhere with the appointment by Boniface IX of Angelo di Samuele as a civil and criminal magistrate for Jews in Cosenza, Montalto, and Crotona. Jewish recourse to Christian notaries was, however, frequent, for the redaction of all sorts of acts and contracts, mainly concerning business but sometime also regarding nuptial pacts and wills.²⁶

The official recognition of the partial institutional autonomy of the Jews in civil matters dates back to the first half of the fifteenth century, first by the Visconti dynasty and then by the Sforza dynasty. This partial institutional autonomy was based on privileges concerning Jewish jurisdictional autonomy granted in the State of Milan from the fifteenth century onwards, and a long-standing tradition of rabbinic courts, regulated in the West since Roman times.²⁷ In the second half of the fifteenth century, traces can be found of a master Jacob 'judice de li ebrei' [judge of the Jews] by chapter granted by the Duke, and of Yosef Kolon in Pavia, who was considered at the time as the greatest rabbinic authority in Northern Italy, whose role was equal to, although perhaps not formally recognized, that of magistrate of the Jews. It is not certain

25 On the parallelism between Jewish *universitates* and professional corporations see Marina Caffiero, *Gli ebrei italiani dall'età dei Lumi agli anni della Restaurazione*, in *Storia d'Italia. Annali* n. *Gli ebrei in Italia*, 11. *Dall'emancipazione a oggi* (Turin, 1997), pp. 1089–1132 and the bibliography of the same author cited above.

26 See Serena Di Nepi, *I registri notarili ebraici come fonte storica*, in *Materia giudaica. Rivista dell'Associazione italiana per lo studio del giudaismo*, 1/2 (2004), pp. 53–64.

27 S 2/2540. On the Roman roots of Jewish jurisdictional autonomy see the many studies by Alfredo Mordechai Rabello, many of which are now collected in *The Jews in the Roman Empire. Legal Problems: from Herod to Justinian* (Aldershot, 2000) e in *Ebraismo e diritto. Studi sul Diritto ebraico e gli ebrei nell'impero romano* (Soveria Mannelli, 2009), 2 volumes.

whether such legal autonomy was always considered intangible and exercised in a continuous way. Indeed, we know that rabbinic courts of the Lombard *universitates* still requested periodic confirmation of their authorization to issue judgments in cases of religious divergence amongst Jews in the middle of the sixteenth century. In 1513 the definitive inclusion of recognition of juridical autonomy in the statutes granted to the Jews in the Duchy, which was to be regularly reconfirmed by the Spanish authorities who replaced the Sforza rule in 1535. We also know that in the sixteenth century the practice of representatives of the Jewish communities meeting and coordinating actions and delegations concerning common interests was well established. In the same year, 1535, the Jews in the Duchy of Milan, for example, meet ‘per consultare le cosse sue’ [to discuss their issues]; and again in 1533 they met at Pizzighettone with the same aim. In the middle of the sixteenth century, Lodi was to become the habitual meeting place for these meetings between representatives and members of Lombard communities. It was here, in Lodi, in 1579, in a general council, that the chapters for internal taxation of the community were taken up, called *Seder ha-Hashba’a veba-Ha’aracha*; the oldest of the Italo-Hebrew fiscal rules to have survived in printed form.²⁸

The government of relations between Jews, Christians, and ducal authorities was run by a plurality of figures, functionaries, or representatives who, even in this case, did not exercise their powers in continuous form, but that needed periodic renewals. In 1510 the first recorded use of the term *donatorii o conservatori* (of Jews) is used to designate Christian public officials with the role of defending Jews from insults and public violence, administering at the same time justice in the relationships between Jews or between Jews and Christians. The definition appears in Cremona, at the time of French domination; in this city the activity of ‘agenti per li hebrei’ [agents for the Jews] is still documented in 1547.²⁹ In 1516 the governor of Italy on behalf of the king of France, the count of Foix, appointed a Captain Esterlim ‘conservator et comissario generale sopra la setta de li Judey’ [custodian and general commissioner of the Jewish sect], in order to administer justice, protect Jews from persecution, and permit them to ‘viver bene et decentemente’³⁰ [live well and with decency]. In 1522 it was duke Francesco II who appointed the countess Caterina Bianca de Pietra, widow of Brunoro Pietra, and the secretary Giorgio Gadio ‘domini et donatori compositionis et iurisdictionis universitatis hebreorum’, and therefore general custodians of the Jews in the Duchy with civil jurisdiction on controversies

28 S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, p. LXI.

29 S 2/2539.

30 S 2/2358.

between Jews and Christians and control on the implementation of money-lending activities. These individuals were charged with appointing in turn a person able to act as custodian of the Jews whose duties were to oversee the correct application and observance of their privileges. In 1542, the duties of Caterina Bianca Stampa, as she had become on her second marriage to the count of Lodrone, were renewed.³¹ The retributions exercised by these custodians were guaranteed by taxation on the business activities of Jews, who, in their working environment, made more frequent use of these services. Some documentary evidence, however, shows that Jewish businessmen continued to bring their disputes before Jewish mediators, considering the Christian custodians appointed by the Duke a 'gentile court' recourse to which was only made in the case of extreme necessity.³²

Particular occasions and needs could also lead the Milanese authorities to appoint *ad hoc* officials able to carry out the tasks pertinent to the life of the Jewish community and their relations with central government. The town council of Lodi, in 1579, elected three fiscal assessors and appointed within the Jewish *universitates* a number of *massari* to draft lists of Jewish contributions and to collect declarations of property on which to base local taxation. The representatives of the Jewish community, habitually known as *massari* by Christian authorities, were in turn given the responsibility of day to day management of the community, according to a mechanism common to Jewish *universitates* in Northern Italy at that time. This mechanism was preserved in Alessandria, the only surviving Jewish centre within the State of Milan, until the seventeenth century.³³ The epoch of Spanish rule brought with it the Iberian obsession for *limpieza de sangre* and inquisitorial repression of converted Jews accused of Judaizing, that is of secretly cultivating their religion of birth behind a false baptism into Christianity, and thus saw the appointment of a 'commissario sopra marrani' [commissioner of the *marrani*]. Immediately after Milan passed under Spanish rule, this role was taken by Jan Vuysting, who investigated, amongst other things, the wealth of converts working in the State, even if they were resident elsewhere, with the power to confiscate their assets. Some evidence exists of one such attempt at confiscation by the 'commissario sopra marrani', of containers of merchandise belonging to the

31 S. Simonsohn, *La condizione giuridica degli ebrei*, pp. 119–120; R. Segre, *Gli ebrei lombardi nell'età spagnola*, pp. 12–16. The last appointment mentioned is however documented in S 2/2525; other documentation in S 2/2702 demonstrates how the retribution of the commissioners was still taken from the taxes paid by Jewish people.

32 S. Simonsohn, *La condizione giuridica degli ebrei*, p. 120.

33 *Ibidem*.

Mendes family of Venice, which were later sold at auction.³⁴ Remaining in the mid-sixteenth century, the transit of 'new Christians' from Portugal through the Milanese State was attentively supervised by the government and taxed at one *scudo* per person for those over seven years of age, and half a *scudo* for those under the age of seven. The task of collecting the contributions fell to the captain of Pavia's harbour. All the 'marrani' who arrived from Turin and Genoa without a receipt of payment had to be arrested.³⁵

The Spanish Epoch

The age of Spanish domination, in regard to Jewish presence in the State of Milan, was characterised by a fundamental discontinuity embodied in the definitive decree issued on 10 March 1597 by Phillip II, of expulsion of Jews from the State. Most Milanese Jews left the state territories the following month. From that time the only, small Jewish presence in the State of Milan was the group in Alessandria, a city that was to be annexed to the Duchy of Savoy in 1709. From the eighteenth century up until the French Revolution, the State of Milan registered the continuous presence of only one Jewish family, in the town of Lodi. It is not possible, within the scope of this essay, to consider the history of the Jewish community in Mantua. The Duchy of Mantua, despite being united to the State of Milan in 1708 to form Austrian Lombardy, remained an autonomous entity until at least 1786, and then it regained separate administration from 1791 until the Treaty of Campo Formio (1797), which sanctioned the creation of the Cisalpine Republic.

The passage of the Milanese state under the rule of Charles V of Spain following the death of Francesco Sforza (1535), did not initially imply significant changes for Jewish people in terms of their legal status or living conditions. In the second half of the sixteenth century, according to Simonsohn's estimations, their number grew consistently (cf. Tab. 15.1), also due to the arrival of other Jews coming from the Vatican State. Jews had been expelled from the Vatican State with the *Haebreorum gens sola* bull issued on 26 February 1569, which called for the removal of Jews from all cities except Roma and Ancona. Many small communities from the State of the Church, and also the populous

34 Cf. S 2/2528–2529–2530. On this figure, see also Aron de Leone Leoni *La nazione ebraica spagnola e portoghese di Ferrara (1492–1559). I suoi rapporti col governo ducale e la popolazione locale e i suoi legami con le nazioni portoghesi di Ancona, Pesaro e Venezia*, ed. Laura Graziani Secchieri (Florence, 2011), 2 volumes, volume 2, p. 773.

35 S 2/2562.

TABLE 15.1 *Estimates of demographic levels of Jews in the State of Milan from 1488 to 1685/6.*

Year	Totals	Cremona	Lodi	Pavia	Alessandria	Casalmaggiore	Caravaggio
1488	400						
1522	300						
1556	350						
1567	350						
1568			60				
1570		100					
1576		317					
1585		145(*)					
1589	889	456	130	123	103	71	6
1590	889/90	456	130/1	123	103	71	6
1591	890	400					
1597	360						
1685/6	258		27		231		

Source: Shlomo Simonsohn, *Introduction*, p. LXIX, in which the methodology of data gathering is clearly explained.
(*)—Partial data.

universitates in Bologna were demolished in this way: the ‘*Emeq ha-bakah*’ shows precisely the flow of displaced people, indicating that they ‘dispersed to Ferrara and Mantua, Pesaro and Urbino, Tuscan lands, and the State of Milan’.³⁶

The limitations placed on the presence of Jews inside the walls of the city of Milan were, even in the Spanish era, a matter of controversy. As their representatives repeated in a petition of 1566, ducal privileges provided for the freedom of Jews to move around within the boundaries of the State. Retracting these privileges, the government or the Senate fixed limits to the terms under which Jewish people could stay in the city, both in terms of duration—generally fixed at three days—and for activities conducted, granting visits only for business reasons. The Senate passed a law from the 1570s that makes provision for Jews to live in the city of Milan only with a special permit and only in houses in which there were no Christian residents. A permit of permanent

36 Cited by Renata Segre, *La Controriforma: espulsioni, conversioni, isolamento*, in *Storia d'Italia. Annali n. Gli ebrei in Italia*, pp. 707–778, p. 727.

residence could be given in this case to one Jewish person only, who would be accompanied by a servant.³⁷

Even after the concentration of Jews into ghettos as dictated by the bull *Cum nimis absurdum* issued by Paul IV (1555), Milanese Jews outside the capital could continue to live and move around in relative freedom. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the legal basis for the existence of Jews within the Duchy, later extended to the whole Spanish State, remained the privilege established by the last Duke in 1533. This privilege acknowledged the right of Jews to live in any part of the Duchy, with the exception of Milan, for eight years. Provision was also made for their exemption from personal or royal duties, loans, and mortgages, and they were granted the possibility of carrying out mercantile and banking activity, of freely practising religious rituals, of butchering meat according to traditional customs, and keeping a cemetery, furthermore, dispensing with the mandatory wearing of the yellow symbol dictated by canonical dispositions.³⁸ As Renata Segre has observed, these provisions display a liberality, on the part of the Sforza family, that is relatively unmatched in sixteenth century Italy. 'This cannot be explained only by the utility [from the Jewish bankers] gleaned by the Duke Treasury, but constitutes an element in the overall revival of Milan after the long period of war and hardships of all kinds'.³⁹ The privilege obtained confirmation and renewal under Charles V and Phillip II, but not without cost. The renewals were, indeed, accompanied with extraordinary taxes and requests for money, including 2,000 ducats on the occasion of the renewal, or one-off donations of 8,000 ducats in 1555. Each renewal, furthermore, was accompanied by a lowering of the interest rate allowed to Jews in pawn brokering.⁴⁰

The direct interconnection existing between the economic role of the Jews, with the continuous redefinition of conditions of money lending on pledge, and their legal and institutional standing was confirmed once again in the Milanese territories in the second half of the sixteenth century. Phillip II, who, in 1560, had already put into writing his desire to expel the Jews from the State of Milan as well, conforming with what his father Charles V had done with the Neapolitan territories, in 1566 officially prohibited pawn brokering with interest practised by Jews. Even the collection of alms by Jews was, throughout

37 S 2/3322.

38 The text can be found in S 2/2438; the confirmation of Charles V in S 2/2484.

39 R. Segre, *Gli ebrei lombardi nell'età spagnola*, pp. 5–6.

40 Shlomo Simonsohn, *Un privilegio di Francesco II Sforza agli ebrei del ducato di Milano*, in *Scritti in memoria di Sally Mayer*, ed. Umberto Nahon (Milan-Jerusalem, 1956), pp. 308–324.

the Modern Age and even after their expulsion at the end of the sixteenth century, subject to special permits, indispensable both for parents and for the children who would eventually help them.⁴¹ Ordered by an announcement on 2 September 1566, this measure represents a fundamental watershed: it signifies the passage in the Milanese state from the substantial tolerance towards Jews historically adopted by the local authorities, to a severity that echoed the papal politics of the mid sixteenth century, particularly Pius v. Although documentary evidence demonstrates that Jews continued to practise money-lending in a clandestine way, often disguising credit with trade in jewels,⁴² the prohibition of 1566 led to thirty years of worsening conditions for Jews living in the Milanese State under the Spanish crown, culminating in their definitive expulsion in 1597.

The 1566 ban therefore accentuated a professional differentiation amongst the Jewish population who had been living in the State for the previous decades. Clearly, not all Jewish people living in the State of Milan over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were committed to money lending activities, although this activity was often an underlying purpose of their stay in the territory. Many Jewish people benefitted indirectly from residence permits and the legal and religious concessions established through the *condotte*, which were generally granted to whole family groups or whole *universitates* even though only a limited number of individuals were active in giving credit. Secret information passed from the podestà of Lodi to Massimiliano Sforza in May 1513 show that at that moment ten family groups were resident in Lodi totally around seventy people; of which only five were involved in money lending and were in good economic conditions, whereas the other five families 'se travaglia[va]no in far qualche facende per guadagnare il victo' [did odd jobs to put food on the table].⁴³ Following the official ban on pawn brokering some Jews attempted to force through the traditional hostility of trade corporations and the equally long-standing prohibitions on the possession or management of property. There is evidence of Jews who managed to take on rented agricultural businesses, or who moved towards the production and sale of carpets, alongside the sale of second hand goods and of arms. The second half of the sixteenth century in the State of Milan also saw the activity of important Jewish technicians and inventors, amongst whom Israel de Levitiis of Pavia, known as Donato, who, in the 1570s worked on systems to grind grain, and the engineer Abraham Colorni, who was able to offer the Spanish governor the possibility of buying projects

41 Cf. the various permits granted between 1554 and 1634 cited in S 2/2895.

42 See R. Segre, *La Controriforma*, p. 751.

43 S 2/2327.

that would be able to do no less than some undescribed *miraculous things*, probably related to warfare. In 1591, in Madrid Simone Vitale Sacerdote presented a project to desalinate seawater, whilst the Pavia brothers invented a pump and an efficient irrigation system, patented and adopted later both in the State and abroad.⁴⁴

Furthermore, over a long period Milanese Judaism issued forth a significant number of highly skilled individuals in very diverse professional, scientific, and intellectual spheres. Positions of *inzegeo* (engineer) and doctor were already taken by Jews in the Sforza court of the fifteenth century. We know that several rabbis lived in the Milanese territories of the Early Modern Era, even if we are not aware of many of their names. The most famous of these rabbis was rabbi Joseph Colon Trabotto, who, in the fifteenth century lived in Pavia, where he was laid to rest. Piacenza too was, for a certain time in the fifteenth century, an important Jewish cultural and religious centre. There is evidence of a Yeshiva (a centre for the study of the Torah and the Talmud at university level) in Piacenza in the 1470s; the rabbi Abraham di Castellano took on the role of reader and lecturer in Hebrew, at the request of local Jews and with the permission of the duke. In 1490 a Spanish Jew converted to Christianity, called Benedicto, was appointed reader of Hebrew by Ludovico il Moro at the University of Pavia with the annual salary of 50 florins.⁴⁵ Several Jewish intellectuals were named as resident in the State of Milan in the sixteenth century, however with reference to the seventeenth century, only the names of a small number of rabbis resident in Alessandria are known, amongst whom: Manahem Sanson Basilea, Joseph ben Michael Ravenna and Abraham Segre.

The Sforza, much the same as other Renaissance Princes, cultivated an interest in Hebrew language and literature. Francesco Sforza's library contained a Hebrew Bible and prayer books, and Ludovico il Moro invited master Solomon, son of Aaron Gallico, to live within his territories in order to provide him with Hebrew manuscripts and to translate them into Latin. A relatively high number of Jewish doctors cared for the ducal families under the Visconti and Sforza dynasties, including the famous Elia di Sabato Beer of Fermo, doctor to Filippo Maria Visconti as well as other sovereigns and popes, and also Guglielmo (Benjamin) Portaleone, who was doctor to some of the Sforza Dukes and also the King of Naples.⁴⁶ Even the King of France, Louis XII, who at that time held the title of Duke of Milan, in 1505 permitted a Jewish doctor Jacob and his family to reside in the Duchy without wearing the symbol, in gratitude of the

44 S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, pp. LIX–LX.

45 S 2/2181–2182–2183.

46 S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, pp. LXIV–LXVI.

service they provided to French forces.⁴⁷ In 1515 duke Massimiliano Sforza permitted the painter Mosé da Castellazzo to live in Milan with his family, allowing them to travel freely, exemption from tax and duties, to carry weapons, and to be independent of the discipline of the local Jewish community. Mosé was later to receive the same privileges from the Duke of Mantua and from the Republic of Venice, where he completed an illustrated Pentateuch, a masterpiece in block printing of the age.⁴⁸

Milanese Jews towards the Expulsion

The second half of the seventeenth century, in the State of Milan, saw a considerable change in political climate with regard to the Jews. Within the overarching framework of repression and religious dissent and increasing intolerance of minorities that characterizes Italy at the beginning of the Counter Reformation was accompanied by an increasingly inflexible anti-Semitism by the hierarchy of the Milanese church. This was due, to a great extent, to the role of religious guide adopted in the archdiocese of Carlo Borromeo.⁴⁹ The first provincial synod presided over by Borromeo in 1566, insisted on denouncing the existence of a promiscuity of work and life between Jews and Christians within contemporary Lombard society. Carlo Borromeo, faithful to traditional approaches elaborated by Augustine in late antiquity, pronounced himself to be against the expulsion of the Jews from the archdiocese. He did, however, increase the pressure to convert them to Christianity, whilst, at the same time, the church in Rome worked, through the Congregation of the Holy Office (Sant'Ufficio) and through local inquisitors, to break the 'dangerous links' between Jews and Christians and to impose increasing isolation on Jewish people.⁵⁰ In 1575, in the edict that concluded his long pastoral visit throughout the diocese, Borromeo formulated injunctions and bans on contact between Christians and Jews on behalf of the Pope. Amongst the renewed bans were; the ban on Christians

47 S 2/2307.

48 The privilege is reproduced in S 2/2354. On the work of Mosé da Castellazzo cf. now Paul D. Kaplan, *Old Testament Heroes in Venetian High Renaissance Art*, in *Beyond the Yellow Badge. Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism in Medieval and Early Modern Visual Culture*, ed. Mitchell B. Merback (Brill, 2007), pp. 277–304, pp. 302–303.

49 On the importance of and the general themes of the work of Borromeo see, to begin with, R. Po-chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770* (Cambridge UK, 2nd edition 2005), pp. 55–58 and 111–129.

50 The reference is to the recent study by Marina Caffiero, *Legami pericolosi. Ebrei e cristiani tra eresia, libri proibiti e stregoneria* (Turin, 2012).

employing Jewish people, on 'far contratto alcuno di mercantia o di compagnia con giudeo [...] et spetialmente di cose concernenti vettovaglia' [to enter into commercial agreements or relations with Jews [...] in particular about provisions], on being treated by a Jewish doctor, on employing Jewish agents for weddings, of 'conversatione' with Jews particularly during religious observances or holidays, as well as the ban on entering into synagogues or sharing meals.⁵¹

Given the substantial worsening of the political and religious climate in which Milanese Jews lived in the Spanish era, the fact that the claimed credits from the government and held an important commercial role in the system of local economy of the time must have seemed to many Jews as a guarantee of intangibility. The credits claimed by Jews on the government had amassed because of different reasons and over different periods of time. Alongside these credits came the evidence of the advantages derived from the commercial dynamism of the Jewish people, which benefited the entire Lombard economy. A government inquiry completed in 1590, questioning the tax collectors, depicted a local commercial environment whose dynamism was fundamentally based on Jewish shops and their expenses. Many tax collectors highlighted the fundamental role undertaken by the good services offered, with the free loan of beds and furniture, to soldiers of the garrison and to guests travelling through the State.⁵²

Despite this evidence, however, in the second half of the sixteenth century, Phillip II held firm on his decision to definitively expel Jews from the State of Milan. The pressure applied by local authorities would have effected this decision, amongst which the representatives of Cremona exerted particular pressure. Over time in Cremona, Jewish people had specialised in the field of editing and printing; another sector which, alongside offering credit, from the mid-sixteenth century was subjected to progressive restrictions, in this case primarily from ecclesiastical quarters. The Soncino family worked in the Duchy of Milan, the very first printers of the *Talmud*: a Jewish family who came from Speyer in Germany and established themselves in the small town in the province of Cremona from which they took their name. The first Hebrew books from Europe appear towards the end of the 1470s, probably in Rome. Individual treatise from the Babylonian *Talmud* were printed in Spain in around 1480, and on 2 February 1484, Israel Natan ben Samuel gave to the Soncino printers, together with his son Yošua Moses, the treatise *Berakhot*. The Soncino printers

51 R. Segre, *La Controriforma*, pp. 717–718; Ead., *Il mondo ebraico nel carteggio di Carlo Borromeo*, extract from Michael. *On the History of the Jews of the Diaspora. Proceedings of the Diaspora Research Institute, Tel Aviv University*, 1 (1972), ed. S. Simonsohn, pp. 163–260.

52 Ivi, p. 752.

moved to Casalmaggiore in 1486, and later, in 1488–90 they returned to Soncino; later they were transferred to other cities including Mantua, Cremona, Naples, Brescia, Pesaro and Rimini. The family produced around 140 Hebrew texts of which twenty three were treatises from the *Talmud*, between 1484 and 1519.⁵³ Even within this cultural and productive environment, the censorial measures of the Christian authorities, for the most part from the Popes and the Roman Inquisition, translated into increasing limitations and repression. They culminated in the burning of the *Talmud* in Rome in 1553 and in the *Cum sicut nuper* of Pope Julius III (1554), which forced all Jewish communities to hand over to bishops all the books that contained elements that were considered to be insults against Jesus within four months, with the threat of financial punishments and confiscation of assets as well as corporal punishment which could be extended to the death penalty. At the same time, different forms of expurgation, if not out and out destruction of printed Hebrew books were imposed by local communities, also in the State of Milan.⁵⁴

Naturally, this climate irreparably damaged the thriving industry of Hebrew book production in the State of Milan. This was a sector in which Christian printers also operated, among whom to name but few famous names were Vincenzo Conti and Cristoforo Draconi who also worked in Cremona. Christian printers employed Jewish workers, both as revisers of drafts and as editorial and textual consultants. The books produced by them, including the Bible, legislative texts, prayer books, the Midrash and the Cabbala, including the *Zohar*, were furthermore commissioned and purchased principally by Jewish people. In the second half of the sixteenth century, alongside the ecclesiastical limitations, the resumption of free circulation of Hebrew books printed in Venice also damaged the Hebrew printing sector in Cremona. In 1557, at the time of an inquiry ordered by the Senate of Milan following pressure from the Congregation of the Holy Office, the only local printer able to produce Hebrew texts was the Christian Vincenzo Conti, who worked with the consultancy of an illustrious *Talmud* scholar, Yosef Ottolengo, who exercised prudent preventative censorship. In March 1559, following very violent Lenten preaching, the Senate revoked Conti's license to print in Hebrew, and went as far as burning a vast number of Hebrew books, many of which had nothing to do with the *Talmud*. Ottolengo, enduring the pressures of the Inquisition, had already moved to Riva di Trento, where he collaborated with typography belonging to

53 See Fausto Parente, *La Chiesa e il Talmud*, in *Storia d'Italia. Annali 11. Gli ebrei in Italia*, pp. 522–643, pp. 572–573.

54 Ibid. See also the essays contained in *Gli ebrei a Cremona. Storia di una comunità fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. Giovanni B. Magagnoli (Florence, 2002).

Cristoforo Madruzzo, mentioned earlier, Cardinal and Prince-Bishop of Trento at the time of the inception of the Council, and future governor of Milan.⁵⁵

Faced with these difficulties, Jewish people in the State of Milan at the end of the sixteenth century continued with the loans sector being their principal specialization, strategically so, also in terms of political mediation with the crown and government institutions. At the end of the sixteenth century, Milanese Jewish bankers had lent the local Treasury a sum of around 32,000 *scudi*, including capital and interest. Not a high credit in relative terms, it is true, but one whose existence offered to Jewish communities an instrument of temporary resistance against the increasing pressure from the Spanish monarch, who desired their expulsion. It should be observed that the Milanese government would not have been stretched to repay the necessary sum that would deprive the Jewish people of their primary defensive weapon. King Phillip could also have made use of the precedents set by Iberian sovereigns in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, who had forced the expatriation of Jewish populations much greater in number than the Lombard population with no regard to absolving contractual obligations concerning finance. Shlomo Simonsohn invoked 'the well-known fanatical formalism' of Phillip II, recalling the code of honour that led the Hapsburg ruler to meticulously respect contractual obligations with the Jews before proceeding to their definitive expulsion. Prior to, or immediately after the expulsion, Milanese authorities thus repaid all Jewish creditors almost all the debts owed to them by the Milanese government. Of the 28,000 *scudi* of credit offered by the Jews to the local government, 5,000 were paid in cash in order to facilitate the departure. The remainder were involved in a lawsuit brought about by the Treasury pending before the Council of Milan. All the heads of Jewish household, forced to leave the territories, signed legal mandates allowing representatives to continue the trial. Despite the governor issuing orders necessary to protect the safety of departing people and their goods, under the responsibility of local authorities, one of the most prominent personalities of the community in Lodi, Moise Pugliese, was killed together with his son Emanuele (Menachem), when their dwelling was sacked.⁵⁶ In the early years of the seventeenth century all creditors were refunded a large proportion of the credit they had given. The majority of them, as the notorial acts of a notary who registered the names and the amounts

55 F. Parente, *La Chiesa e il Talmud*, pp. 596–597; R. Segre, *Gli ebrei lombardi nell'età spagnola*, pp. 33–37; S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, pp. LXVI–LXVIII.

56 S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, quotation from p. XLIX.

of credit, moved in the meantime to the areas of Piedmont, Monferrato, the Veneto, Mantua, and Emilia.⁵⁷

The expulsion of the Jews from the State of Milan that took place in the final years of the sixteenth century saved only four people: Clemente Pavia, Consiglio Carmini, Isaac Soave, and Simone Vitale Sacerdoti. The first three were official representatives of the expelled Jews, and in that role they were allowed to remain. After the ruling on the dispute over credit, the first two left the State of Milan. As late as 1629, however, the presence of the sons of Isaac Soave is registered in Cremona, from which they left immediately afterwards. The only remaining family that lived stably in the State of Milan, in Alessandria in the seventeenth century and in Lodi in the eighteenth century was the family of Simone Vitale Sacerdoti. Both he and his descendants, alongside banking and commercial activities, continued the activity of pawn brokering, applying variable interest rates, over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of between 15% and 30%.⁵⁸ The life of the small community in Alessandria was under the watchful eye of the Inquisition, which, over the seventeenth century was to develop what recent historiography has described as an out-and-out 'anti-Semitic specialisation'.⁵⁹ In 1681, perhaps sensing the imminent change in climate brought about by Pope Innocent XI and following the continuous pressure exerted by the Roman Inquisition, the banker, Giuseppe Vitali moved to Lodi, where he had obtained the possibility of buying a dwelling. Here also, however, that privilege over the course of the eighteenth century was to be called into question.⁶⁰ In 1768, his homonymous descendant who was still

57 *Ibid.*, pp. LIII–LIV; R. Segre, *La Controriforma*, p. 712; Ead., *Gli ebrei lombardi nell'età spagnola*.

58 S. Simonsohn, *Introduction*, p. LVIII.

59 On the experiences of the Alessandria community, I must direct you for brevity to Germano Maifreda, *I denari dell'inquisitore. Le finanze del Sant'Ufficio (1542–1750)* (Turin, forthcoming). On the 'anti-Semitic specialisation' of the Holy Office cf. Marina Caffiero, *Battesimi forzati. Storie di ebrei, cristiani e convertiti nella Roma dei papi* (Viella, 2004), pp. 17 onward; Ead., lemma on *Roma*, in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, ed. A. Prosperi with the collaboration of V. Lavenia, J. Tedeschi (Pisa, 2010), volume 1, *ad vocem*; Ead., *Legami pericolosi*, pp. 143 onward., 269 onward. e 296–306. On the relevant however overlooked figure of Simone Vitale Sacerdoti see some indications in Salvatore Foa, *Gli ebrei in Alessandria* (Città di Castello, 1959), p. 14, and the documentation highlighted by S 1, *ad vocem*.

60 See Emanuele C. Colombo, Marco Dotti, *Oikonomia urbana. Uno spaccato di Lodi in età moderna (secoli XVII–XVIII)*, introduction by Pietro Cafaro (Milan, 2011), p. 55. On the fate of the Vitali family permit me to add a reference to Germano Maifreda, *Gli ebrei e l'economia milanese. L'Ottocento* (Milan, 2000), pp. 37 onward. On the demographic composition of

living in Lodi was forced to ask permission of the Austrian authorities to keep, in the city of Milan, 'un picciolo appartamento dove abitare alle contingenze di dovervisi trasferire' [a small apartment in which to live in the event of having to move]. It does not appear, however, that his request was granted.⁶¹ On the eve of the French Revolution, therefore, nothing had substantially changed for the surviving Milanese Jews from the times of the Visconti and Sforza rules. An era in many ways more tolerant compared to that of the Hapsburgs of Spain and Austria.

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the community in Alessandria in 1723 cf. Renata Segre, *Gli ebrei piemontesi nell'età dell'assolutismo*, in *Italia judaica. Atti del III Convegno internazionale, Tel Aviv, 15–20 giugno 1986* (Rome, 1989), pp. 67–80, p. 69.

61 Archivio di Stato di Milano, *Culto. Parte antica*, b. 2160, fasc. 1, Lodi, 29 February 1768.

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Gender and Law in Milan

Thomas Kuehn

The women of Renaissance Milan have been little studied. One finds only scattered references to women in Milan or to gender differentiation in law, with the important exception of an essay by Maria Carla Zorzoli and now some insightful chapters in Chiara Porqueddu's massive study of the Pavese patriciate.¹ One does not find the rich studies of scholars such as Christiane Klapisch-Zuber for Florence, Stanley Chojnacki for Venice, or Simona Feci's delightful and informative *Pesci fuor d'acqua* about Rome.²

Research on women in Florence and Venice can provide a useful context for study of women in Milan, because the two cities are seen as opposites in the spectrum of experiences for women. Chojnacki says Florentine women's "propertyless dependence contrasts starkly with the social and economic resources of their counterparts in Venice."³ Samuel Cohn has declared that Florence "may well have been one of the worst places to have been for a woman in the Italian Renaissance."⁴

1 Maria Carla Zorzoli, "Una incursione nella pratica giurisprudenziale milanese del Seicento e qualche riflessione su temi che riguardano la famiglia," in *Ius mediolani: Studi di storia del diritto milanese offerti dagli allievi a Giulio Vismara* (Milan, 1996), pp. 617–57; Chiara Porqueddu, *Il patriziato pavese in età spagnola: Ruoli familiari, stile di vita, economia* (Milan, 2012).

2 Cf. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago, 1985); Stanley Chojnacki, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrician Society* (Baltimore, 2000). Simona Feci, *Pesci fuor d'acqua: Donne a Roma in età moderna: diritti e patrimoni* (Rome, 2004). In contrast the neglect of women and gender for Milan in Andrea Gamberini and Francesco Somaini, *L'età dei Visconti e degli Sforza, 1277–1535* (Milan, 2001), or *L'età dei Visconti: Il dominio di Milano fra xiii e xv secolo*, ed. Luisa Chiappa Mauri, Laura De Angelis Cappabianca, and Patrizia Maioni (Milan, 1993).

3 Chojnacki, p. 46. Also Linda Guzzetti and Roberta Fungher, "La dot à Venise et à Trévisé au xiv^e siècle," in *La justice des familles: Autour de la transmission des biens, des savoirs et des pouvoirs (Europe, Nouveau Monde, xii^e–xix^e siècles)*, ed. Anna Bellavitis and Isabelle Chabot (Rome, 2011), pp. 29–48.

4 Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., *Women in the Streets: Essays on Sex and Power in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore, 1996), p. 15.

To be sure, such judgements have come under criticism and been subjected to modification. Chojnacki's positive image of Venice has been notably contested by Anna Bellavitis, who works on Venetian women, and Isabelle Chabot, who has centered her research on Florentine women. They importantly argue for the continuing control of men over women in ways that do not often appear in legal documents, while it has been such texts, especially testaments, that formed the chief source for Chojnacki's conclusions.⁵ In the other direction, the fairly bleak picture for Florentine women has been subjected to scrutiny by scholars who have noted the possibilities for female agency and the effective enforcement of legal protections of women's property.⁶

Where did Milanese women's legal capacities and rights to property stand? If we go by the judgement of one of the Colonna of Rome, writing to Carlo Borromeo, we would have to say that the laws of Milan proved "disadvantageous" for women at least in comparison with Rome.⁷ We will examine that claim by inquiring along two lines: the statutory access to property by women, involving mainly inheritance and dowry, and statutory restrictions on women's legal agency, their capacity to manage and dispose of what property they had. While these approaches do not necessarily tell us what women's lives were like (a task for which many other types of sources are needed and have to be carefully handled), they give us the comparative parameters in which they operated.

5 Anna Bellavitis and Isabelle Chabot, "A proposito di 'Men and Women in Renaissance Venice' di Stanley Chojnacki," *Quaderni storici* 118 (April 2005), 203–238.

6 Thomas Kuehn, *Law, Family, and Women: Toward a Legal Anthropology of Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, 1991); idem, "Protecting Dowries in Law in Renaissance Florence," in *Florence, 1350 to 1550: Essays in Memory of Bill Kent*, ed. Peter Howard and Cecilia Hewlett (Turnhout, in press); Julius Kirshner, "Wives' Claims against Insolvent Husbands in Late Medieval Italy," in *Women of the Medieval World: Essays in Honor of John H. Mundy*, ed. Julius Kirshner and Suzanne F. Wemple (Oxford, 1985), pp. 256–303; idem, "Materials for a Gilded Cage: Non-Dotal Assets in Florence, 1300–1500," in *The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. David I. Kertzer and Richard P. Saller (New Haven and London, 1991), pp. 184–203; Roberta Braccia, "'Uxor gaudet de morte mariti': La donatio propter nuptias tra diritto comune e diritti locali," *Annali di Facoltà di Giurisprudenza di Genova* 30 (2000–2001), 76–128; Emlyn Eisenach, *Husbands, Wives, and Concubines: Marriage, Family, and Social Order in Sixteenth-Century Verona* (Kirkville, 2004), pp. 68–75; Isabelle Chabot, *La dette des familles: Femmes, lignage et patrimoine à Florence aux xiv^e et xv^e siècles* (Rome, 2011).

7 P. Renée Baernstein, "Regional Inter-marriage among the Italian Nobility in the Sixteenth Century," in *Marriage in Premodern Europe: Italy and Beyond*, ed. Jacqueline Murray (Toronto, 2012), pp. 201–219, at p. 208.

Women's Property in Milanese Statutes

Of course the lives of women were not all alike. Allowance has to be made both for variations by social class and for changes over time. And women's rights and capacities varied by their familial status, as married or unmarried, as daughter, wife, or widow.⁸ That said, we can also note that Milan had a rich legislative history, which was also projected over other Lombard cities, and it allows us one means to track chronological change in the rights of women to have property in their name (ownership), and in the capacities they had to control, use, or dispose of property and themselves (agency).⁹

For Milan and all the places her rulers came to control, the law as taught and elaborated in the universities of Italy, notably at nearby Pavia, based on the Justinianic texts of Roman civil law and texts of canon law, held the place of a common law, *ius commune*. Statutes of a community, then, were its *ius proprium*. It changed, built on, and abrogated portions of *ius commune*, and it also assumed *ius commune* to fill in gaps in local law and provide the basic definitions and framework to working legal institutions, such as dowry or testament.¹⁰

Women had a limited personhood in *ius commune*. They could not hold government or judicial posts, act as agents or guarantors for others, testify in court in many instances, or stand as witnesses to others' legal acts. Still, they could obligate themselves and their property and were primarily responsible for their own debts.¹¹ So whereas medieval jurists gave expression to ideological notions

8 Thomas Kuehn, "Daughters, Mothers, Wives, and Widows: Women as Legal Persons," in *Time, Space, and Women's Lives in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anne Jacobson Schutte, Thomas Kuehn, and Silvana Seidel Menchi (Kirksville, 2001), pp. 97–115 (Italian version: "Figlie, madri, mogli, e vedove: Donne come persone giuridiche," in *Tempi e spazi di vita femminile tra medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. Silvana Seidel Menchi, Anne Jacobson Schutte, and Thomas Kuehn [Bologna, 1999], pp. 431–460).

9 Claudia Storti Storchi, "Giudici e giuristi nelle riforme viscontee del processo civile per Milano (1330–1386)," in *Ius mediolani*, pp. 47–187, at pp. 53–54.

10 Maria Gigliola di Renzo Villata, "La vita del diritto nella Milano del tardo Quattrocento," in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro, Atti del convegno internazionale 28 febbraio–4 marzo 1983* (Milan, 1983), pp. 147–169, at pp. 149–151; Franca Leverotti, "Leggi del principe, leggi della città nel ducato visconteo-sforzesco," in *Signori, regimi signorili e statuti nel tardo medioevo*, ed. Rolando Dondarini, Gian Maria Varanini, and Maria Venticelli (Bologna, 2003), pp. 143–188.

11 Cf. Thomas Kuehn, "Person and Gender in the Laws," in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis (London and New York, 1998), pp. 87–106, at pp. 91–93; Manlio Bellomo, *La condizione giuridica della donna in Italia: Vicende antiche e moderne* (Turin, 1970). On the situation in Roman law, Yan Thomas, "The Division of the Sexes in Roman Law," in *A History of Women in the West*, ed. Georges Duby and Michelle

of female weakness (*fragilitas*) or intellectual limitations (*imbecillitas*), they also gave voice to notions embedded in the civil law that women, far from being inept and defenseless, were cunning and greedy in their own regard.¹² The legal aphorism ran *mulierum genus avarissimum est*.

Canon law, which carried many restrictions on women, nonetheless conceded to mothers, as civil law had not, the ability to act as legal guardians of their minor children.¹³ More importantly, regarding marital consent, canon law elevated the wife to a full consensual partner in the union, in theory if not in fact.¹⁴ So in the end, *ius commune* posed few limitations with regard to women's capacity to act in regard to property and family. As O.F. Robinson points out, "the theoretical equality of the sexes before the private law was largely achieved" by the time of Justinian.¹⁵ Where that equality was perhaps most apparent was with regard to inheritance. By the time of Justinian Roman daughters had full inheritance rights to property alongside sons.¹⁶ A myriad of local rules and customs were not so kind. Throughout Italy women faced statutory and customary restrictions on their rights to own and inherit property and on their agency with regard to any holdings or assets.¹⁷ Milan was no exception in this regard, though the Milanese laws had their own peculiar and evolving qualities.

The statutes of 1216 made it clear that women in Milan did not have the same inheritance rights as men. The rubric on succession stated that in the agnatic

Perrot, 5 vols., vol. 1: *From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, ed. Pauline Schmitt Pantel (Cambridge, MA, 1992), pp. 83–137.

- 12 Alberico da Rosciate (d. 1354) to D. 16.1.4, *In secundam partem Digesti Veteris* (Venice, 1585). He also elaborated elsewhere (*In primam Codicis partem commentarii* [Venice, 1586] to C. 3.28.20) that women were *mobiles, inconstantes, avarae, malae, nimis crudeles*.
- 13 Gigliola Villata di Renzo, *La tutela: Indagini sulla scuola dei glossatori* (Milan, 1975), pp. 137–59; Giulia Calvi, *Il contratto morale: Madri e figli nella Toscana moderna* (Bari, 1994).
- 14 See Daniela Lombardi, *Matrimoni di antico regime* (Bologna, 2001); Philip L. Reynolds and John Witte, Jr., eds, *To Have and To Hold: Marrying and Its Documentation in Western Christendom, 400–1600* (Cambridge, 2007).
- 15 O.F. Robinson, "The Historical Background," in *The Legal Relevance of Gender: Some Aspects of Sex-Based Discrimination*, ed. Sheila McLean and Noreen Burrows (Atlantic Highlands, 1988), pp. 40–60, at p. 56. Also Jane F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (London, 1986), pp. 5–29; Maria Teresa Guerra Medici, *Diritti delle donne nella società altomedievale* (Naples, 1986), pp. 51–64; Antti Arjava, *Women and Law in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 1996).
- 16 Cf. Andrew Borkowski and Paul du Plessis, *Textbook on Roman Law*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 2005), pp. 215–216.
- 17 Serena Ferente, "Women and the State," in *The Italian Renaissance State*, ed. Andrea Gamberini and Isabella Lazzarini (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 345–367.

line all women were “expelled” by nearer males, except sisters and aunts; a wife could not succeed her husband if any agnates or cognates survived him; a mother could not succeed her son if any agnates survived or his sister or aunt or their sons; a daughter could not succeed her father because of her brothers, if she had been dowered and married. As mother, a woman could add to the portions of her sons (*meliorare*) while their father could not, but as a widow she could be left nothing more than usufruct, though that included suitable *alimenta*, “as long as she remained in her husband’s home living honestly and did not receive her dowry and quarter.”¹⁸

This statute was in line with those of many other places that abrogated the equality of succession in *ius commune* and advantaged men. What is a bit curious about this early Milanese statute is that it only once makes reference to dowry, and it says nothing about inheritance of the dowry. Dowry was the rationale behind the exclusion of daughters and sisters from inheritance, so much so that such statutes were said by jurists to embody an *exclusio propter dotem*.¹⁹ But these statutes also embodied a bias to agnates (*favor agnationis*), so it would seem that women’s exclusion had as much to do with men as with dowry.

In 1216 dowry was perhaps not yet the norm for marital property consignments. Milan still permitted the *quarta* of Lombard law, though with limitations, as spelled out in another statute.²⁰ In contrast to the dowry, brought by the wife to the husband, the *quarta* was a charge on the husband’s goods to which a wife had rights and title, notably on his death. There was broadly by the thirteenth century an *odium quartae*, an “idea di limitare o di escludere l’ampia partecipazione della moglie al patrimonio del marito, *constante matrimonio*, ed il diritto della vedova di lucrare *post mortem viri*, la *quarta omnium bonorum*,” that led to its restriction and ultimate abolition in civic statutes.²¹

Such statutes did not take away all rights to inheritance; they postponed them in favor of others, mainly males. If they were lacking, then women could and did inherit. The interesting point about Milan’s statute governing intestate

18 *Liber consuetudinum mediolani anni mccxvi*, ed. Enrico Besta and Gian Luigi Barni (Milan, 1949), pp. 94–95. See Hagen Keller, “Tradizioni normative e diritto statutario in ‘Lombardia’ nell’età comunale,” in *Legislazione e prassi istituzionale nell’Europa medievale: Tradizioni normative, ordinamenti, circolazione mercantile (secoli xi–xv)*, ed. Gabriella Rossetti (Naples, 2001), pp. 159–173.

19 Cf. Manlio Bellomo, *Ricerche sui rapporti patrimoniali tra coniugi: Contributo alla storia della famiglia medievale* (Milan, 1961), pp. 163–85.

20 *Liber consuetudinum*, pp. 88–91.

21 Bellomo, pp. 1–12.

inheritance is that it did not name all the types of males who excluded dowered women, which was the case in Florence and most other communities. Milan simply referred broadly to agnates and cognates, an extensive range of people and thus seemingly a very prejudicial situation for women there. On the other hand Milanese law did not limit what a woman could inherit if she were admitted to succession. Florence, for example, limited mothers to a fourth of an estate and set a monetary limit even on that.²²

Feudal properties presented other difficulties, so Milan in 1216 also issued a statute on succession to fiefs. It posed that a lord's unstated preference was for male succession. A woman might succeed, when there were no sons, if the originary concession of the fief so allowed. Otherwise "a woman or the female sex should not aspire to inheritance of fiefs."²³ This was generally in line with the *ius commune's* version of feudal law, the *Libri feudorum*, which, after all, was the product initially of a Milanese judge, Oberto da Orto.²⁴ These provisions were little changed even as late as the 1498 statutes; and the few other Lombard cities, such as Bergamo and Brescia, that spoke to the issue of fiefs in their statutes were consistent with Milan in barring women from inheritance of feudal properties.²⁵

The Milanese redaction of 1330 enthroned dowry and justified women's exclusion from their fathers' estates by it.²⁶ Now, if a woman were not suitably dowered by the age of eighteen, she was entitled to a third of the estate.²⁷ Her dowry right was thus forcefully established and protected from claims by the males (generally her brothers or nephews) who could otherwise exclude her. If, after marriage her husband fell into misery, it was decreed that the males who excluded her from the natal patrimony had to support her. Mothers and anyone of their line were excluded from inheriting from their sons by agnates to seven degrees.²⁸

With acceptance of dowry there came into play in Milan all the contradictions and complications of the dotal system, which Klapisch-Zuber and Chabot

22 Kuehn, *Law, Family, and Women*, pp. 241–243.

23 *Liber consuetudinum*, pp. 128–131.

24 Cristina Danusso, "La donna e i feudi: Uno sguardo alla prassi successoria dell'Italia centro-settentrionale fra Tre e Quattrocento," *Rivista di storia del diritto italiano* 65 (1992), 181–239.

25 Franco Niccolai, *La formazione del diritto successorio negli statuti comunali del territorio lombardo-tosco* (Milan, 1940), p. 252.

26 Typically 1330 statutes are reconstructed on the basis of the 1333 statutes of Monza, though here I rely on Niccolai, pp. 77–78.

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*, pp. 133–134.

have done so much to spell out.²⁹ Dowry took the place of the legitimate portion for a daughter, though it was not a *legitima* in law as jurists saw it.³⁰ At the death of the husband, dowry was to be “returned” to the wife, though to avoid that situation statutory law and husbands’ testaments provided her the right to stay in the marital home as long as she remained a chaste widow. A woman’s property remained distinct from the husband’s, just as she was not part of his lineage, even though she was integral to the household and her dowry was intended to support the *onera matrimonii*.³¹

In the redaction of 1396, a major accomplishment of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, women’s inheritance rights gained depth and precision, confronting interpretations raised by jurists as they related Milan’s *ius proprium* to *ius commune*.³² The 1396 rubric *De successionibus ab intestato* reiterated that women were excluded in favor of men, and women in the maternal line were excluded even if in a closer degree of relationship than the putative male heirs.³³ Women or those descended from them could not contest a testament to seek any more than was left them (true also in Florence). If the male who excluded a woman died without legitimate male issue, the woman could claim her share of an estate, providing she brought her dowry into the computation of her share. Brothers or their sons had preference over women and the female line.³⁴ In fact, agnates to the seventh degree were preferred to cognates.³⁵

A wife whose husband predeceased her had the right to her dowry and all that it had earned after she went to her husband, whether or not there were

29 Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual*, pp. 117–131, pp. 213–246; Isabelle Chabot, “La sposa in nero: La ritualizzazione del lutto delle vedove fiorentine (secoli xiv–xv),” *Quaderni storici* 86 (1994), 421–462; eadem, “Seconde nozze e identità materna nella Firenze del tardo medioevo,” in *Tempi e spazi*, pp. 493–523; and above all her *La dette des familles*, pp. 69–186; Stanley Chojnacki, “Riprendersi la dote: Venezia, 1360–1530,” in *Tempi e spazi*, pp. 461–492.

30 Cf. Thomas Kuehn, “Dos Non Teneat Locum Legittime: Dowry as a Woman’s Inheritance in Early Quattrocento Florence,” in *Law and Marriage in Medieval and Early Modern Times*, ed. Per Andersen, Kirsi Salonen, Helle Møller Sigh, and Helle Vogt (Copenhagen, 2012), pp. 231–248. Laura Turchi, “L’eredità della madre: Un conflitto giuridico dello stato estense alla fine del Cinquecento,” in *Le ricchezze delle donne: Diritti e poteri familiari in Italia (xiii–xix secc.)*, ed. Giulia Calvi and Isabelle Chabot (Turin, 1998), pp. 161–185, at pp. 163–164.

31 Zorzoli, pp. 625–633.

32 Ibid., pp. 98–118.

33 Biblioteca Trivulziana B 1 (Statutes of 1396), fol. 154r.

34 B 1, fol. 155r.

35 B 1, fol. 155v.

children, except that she could not take the *vestis maritalis* and jewelry, though she did gain *vestis funebris*.³⁶ The matter of clothing was important in Milan because another statute proclaimed that women's clothing could not be seized for debts, public or private, even on the woman's oath, provided such clothing was for personal use.³⁷ The husband, for his part, could leave his wife up to one quarter of his goods. Otherwise a woman could not claim a quarter.³⁸ In this regard the Lombard *quarta* lived on, as it did in Florence.

When the wife predeceased without children, the husband gained her dowry and other property she brought, unless there were children of a prior marriage of hers, whose rights were not to be affected.³⁹ A Florentine statute of 1415 would take quite the opposite stance, disinheriting children from a woman's previous marriage.⁴⁰ Now in 1396 the wife had the right to make a will, "even without her husband's consent," except that she could not testate her dowry to his loss.⁴¹ A mother could not inherit from a descendant if agnates within seven degrees were present, but she could claim usufruct on what she would have had by *ius commune*, as could a maternal grandfather or other male in the maternal line. Most curious was a final brief clause:

If it should happen, one married a woman and stayed married for ten years, and he did not press a suit about establishing her dowry, it is presumed that she is dowered and as thus dowered she is removed from inheritance to an ascendent and not otherwise.⁴²

This seems to assume that dowry had not been recorded in writing and that later claims (after ten years) may have been fraudulent. These provisions stand in an interesting relation with another rule, intent on protecting creditors, that allowed a mere two years to set a dowry's amount so that creditors could act.⁴³

36 B 1, fol. 156r.

37 B 1, fol. 149v.

38 B 1, fol. 156r.

39 Ibid.

40 Julius Kirshner, "Maritus Lucretur Dotem Uxoris Sue Premortue in Late Medieval Florence," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Kanonistische Abteilung* 77 (1991), 111–155, at p. 134; Chabot, *La dette*, p. 16.

41 B 1, fol. 156v.

42 B 1, fol. 157r: "Si contingerit de cetero mulierem maritavit et steterit per decem annos maritata quod super dote constituenda non moverit querimoniam presumatur esse dotata, que ad hoc ut tamquam dotata repellatur a successione ascendentis et non aliter."

43 B 1, fol. 152r.

There was awareness that husbands might shelter assets under the guise of dowry or alter the amount and contents later as needed.

Statutes throughout Lombardy were more or less in line with those of Milan when it came to intestate succession. Gian Galeazzo Visconti took an active, even aggressive interest in aligning statutes of subject territories with those of Milan, but there the main concern was more a matter of territorial governance, criminal law, and procedure, with much less effort to iron out discrepancies in what we might term private law.⁴⁴ Pavia, armed with its own law school and a caste of *doctores legum*, had its own cherished rules concerning succession and relations between spouses, and yet its statutory framework for intestacy was not all that different from Milan's or those of the rest of Lombardy.⁴⁵ The Pavese norm of 1393 was that dowered women could not succeed with their brothers, while the undowered had a clearly stated right to dowry.⁴⁶ The main difference was that Pavia's language did not extend broadly and ambiguously to *agnati* of seven degrees, as at Milan. In the absence of sons, on intestacy a Pavese woman could inherit, and that remained the case in the later statutes of 1590.⁴⁷ Much like Milan, Pavia gave a mother one third from a child on intestacy, in the absence of descendants, father, grandfather, or brothers. If there were brothers or their children, a mother obtained one third and the brothers the other two thirds. Other Lombard communities did not even allow a mother that much.⁴⁸

Succession of spouses to each other, insofar as it was permitted, took a similar form to Milan's. Franco Niccolai found that some communities also limited inheritance by a widow to what her husband left her, not to exceed a quarter of his worth.⁴⁹ In a manner similar to Milan, Pavia allowed widows only usufruct, making plain that a will that left a wife room in the marital house was understood to take the form of usufruct and to result in no right in the house itself.⁵⁰ Brescia, Valtellina, and Novara set the limit on a wife's inheritance by testament from her husband at a mere twelfth, much less generous than the

44 Niccolai, pp. 78–84; Storti Storchi, “Giudici e giuristi,” pp. 61, 74, 118–138; eadem, “Aspetti generali della legislazione statutaria lombarda in età viscontea,” in *Legislazione e società nell'Italia medievale, Per il VII centenario degli statuti di Albenga (1288)* (Bordighera, 1990), pp. 71–101; Nadia Covini, “La bilanza dritta”: *Pratiche di governo, leggi e ordinamenti nel ducato sforzesco* (Milan, 2007), pp. 111–126.

45 Covini, pp. 125, 180–212.

46 Niccolai, p. 81.

47 Porqueddu, 62–63.

48 Niccolai, pp. 133–138.

49 Niccolai, pp. 183–184.

50 Niccolai, p. 187.

quarter available in Milan or even Florence.⁵¹ As at Milan, husbands gained a portion of their wives' dowries on predecease: all of it at Bergamo and usufruct of it all at Cremona. Bergamo split a dowry equally among children of two marriages of a dead wife, and if there were children by a first marriage but not of a second, they received it all. Cremonese law also allowed the wife on entering a second marriage to give all her dowry to her new mate to the total prejudice of the rights of children of a prior union.⁵² Each community had its peculiarities, but they were all interested to limit what women inherited (as mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives), while insuring their claims to dowry.

Milan's final statutory redaction came in 1498, under the aegis of Ludovico Sforza. The Spanish government in Lombardy after 1535 did nothing to interfere with local private law statutes. The 1498 redaction remained in force during Spanish rule, just as the 1415 statutes of Florence remained in force to the end of the Grand Duchy, though with some tinkering and modifications.⁵³ In the redaction of 1498, the treatment of succession was further expanded. The rubric on intestacy that in 1216 consisted of eight clauses, in total about 250 words, had grown to encompass thirty-one sections taking up fifteen pages in the print edition of 1594. The reason is not hard to find. A later *volgarizzatore* of 1773 began his comments here by noting, "Questa è la più pratica e frequente materia che si tratti nel Foro e ne' Giudizi Civili; a questa si riducono le liti più intricate, più lunghe e per conseguenze più dispendiose; sì perchè se ne eccitano delle nuove, sì perchè le antiche si vogliono ridurre a nuove esame."⁵⁴ Legislative amplification clearly had not resolved all the problems of an important legal area.

The basic statutory situation was unchanged. Women were disadvantaged in inheritance to father, son, or brother in favor of agnates, with protection of their right to a dowry by age eighteen and to support in widowhood.⁵⁵ If the male who excluded a woman from an inheritance himself later died without legitimate male issue, the excluded woman could be admitted to the estate along with any other women who had a claim, although her dowry had to be counted in her share.⁵⁶ The wife still had to surrender the *veste maritali*, any gems or jewelry, and the marital bed, which remained in the husband's estate.

⁵¹ Niccolai, p. 288.

⁵² Niccolai, pp. 189–191.

⁵³ Chabot, *La dette des familles*, pp. 27–29.

⁵⁴ *Statuti di Milano volgarizzati con note e spiegazioni* (Milan, 1773), p. 119.

⁵⁵ *Mediolanensium statuta* (Bergamo, 1594), fols. 63r–64v.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 65r.

The widow got two-thirds of such things if there were no common children, but the husband had heirs by a previous marriage.⁵⁷

The remnant *quarta* again took the form of a restriction on the husband's will; no more than a fourth could be left to the wife.⁵⁸ But this sort of limit could be circumvented by ducal or senatorial approval.⁵⁹ Where the wife predeceased and there were no surviving children, the husband gained her dowry, splitting it with children of a previous marriage.⁶⁰ If there were children, they inherited. If a wife had a will drawn up, she had to have her husband's consent to it, if it touched the dowry and other rights he would gain by statute on her death. If she were childless, in the first ten years of marriage, she could not testate her *paraphernalia* and non-dotal property so that it would go to the "dotantes" (i.e., back to her family). Presumably after ten years she could dispose of it as she saw fit.⁶¹

In all, the statutes of Milan and other Lombard cities disadvantaged women in inheritance in a manner much like everywhere else. For much the same family ideology was at work. The family, its property, name, honor, and memory were to be perpetuated through and to men.⁶² Investments in land and urban properties, business maneuvers, and all sorts of expressive activities were part of fostering and perpetuating the *casata*.

Increasingly employed in inheritance strategies was the legal device of the *fideicommissum*, a testamentary form which, from the late fifteenth century on, linked a substitution of heirs in the male line with a prohibition on alienation of important family properties.⁶³ Here, as Gianna Lumia points out, the onus fell

57 Ibid., fols. 66v–67r.

58 Kuehn, "Person and Gender," p. 95.

59 Ibid., fol. 67v; *Statuti volgarizzati*, p. 132.

60 *Statuta*, fols. 67v–68r. See also Gian Paolo Massetto, "Il lucro dotale nella dottrina e nella legislazione statutaria lombarde dei secoli xiv–xvi," in *Ius mediolani*, pp. 189–364, at pp. 255–275.

61 *Statuta*, fols. 68r–v.

62 Maria Carla Zorzoli, "Della famiglia e del suo patrimonio: riflessioni sull'uso del fedecom-messo in Lombardia tra Cinque e Seicento," in *Marriage, Property, and Succession*, ed. Lloyd Bonfield (Berlin, 1992), pp. 155–213; Thomas Kuehn, "Memoria and Family in Law," in *Art, Memory, and Family in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Giovanni Ciappelli and Patricia Lee Rubin (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 262–274.

63 On this, beyond Zorzoli, "Della famiglia," see Andrea Romano, *Famiglia, successione e patrimonio familiare nell'Italia medievale e moderna* (Turin, 1994); Luigi Tria, *Il fedecom-messo nella legislazione e nella dottrina dal secolo xvi ai giorni nostri* (Milan, 1983); Maura Piccialuti, *L'immortalità dei beni: Fedecom-messo e primogeniture a Roma nei secoli xvii e xviii* (Rome, 1999); Stefano Calonaci, *Dietro lo scudo incantato: I fedecom-messi di famiglia*

on men to be innovative. Women, for all their identification with the lineage of their husbands, could not project themselves into the future; their testamentary bequests looked in simple terms to the living and not the yet-to-be-born.⁶⁴ Use of the *fideicommissum* as a type of inheritable trust increased throughout Lombardy, as in many other regions of Italy, across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In some places—Pavia, for one—property came to be concentrated in fewer hands within especially the noble clans, and primogeniture became a preferred mode of transmission for a few, although Milan continued to have a statute effectively forbidding the practice.⁶⁵ By *fideicommissa* women were essentially excluded from inheritance except for dowry, unless there were no surviving males in the various branches of the family. But women in communities like Pavia, which did not restrict their testamentary capacity as Milan did, were able well into the seventeenth century to use their wills to redress imbalances and direct assets to daughters or other female relations.⁶⁶

There was no more contested area in law and the courts than inheritance. Overlapping or ambiguous claims clashed just about constantly, especially those arising from testaments that modified local laws and customs. Claims to and through women were a large part of these disputes that plagued every community. A privileged vantage point on law in action in inheritance is the learned *consilium* of jurists. Thanks to recent splendid research we now know how pivotal lawyers in Milan were in the developing state.⁶⁷ They were also vital in civil litigation.

One of Milan's more peculiar statutes was one forbidding advantaging one heir. Giason del Maino (1435–1519) dealt with it, in a case in which one married girl was privileged over an unmarried sister, as her dowry was larger than the inheritance portion of the other. He noted that “law loves equality among children” (“lex amat aequalitatem inter liberos”) and that a “reason for this statute is equal affection [for each child].”⁶⁸ But he worked to limit its effects:

e il trionfo della borghesia fiorentina (1400 ca.–1750) (Florence, 2005); and Thomas Kuehn, “Fideicommissum and Family: The Orsini di Bracciano,” *Viator* 39 no. 2 (2008), 323–341.

64 Gianna Lumia, “Mariti e mogli nei testamenti senesi di età moderna,” in *Le ricchezze delle donne*, pp. 43–63, at p. 45.

65 In general, see Zorzoli, “Della famiglia,” and Porqueddu, pp. 15–26.

66 Porqueddu, 231–247.

67 Jane Black, *Absolutism in Renaissance Milan: Plenitude of Power under the Visconti and the Sforza, 1329–1535* (Oxford, 2009); Covini, “La balanza drita”.

68 Giason del Maino, *Consilia*, 4 vols. (Frankfurt, 1611), vol. 3, pp. 160–162 at p. 161a. On his career in Milan, see Black, pp. 161–168.

I think the contrary sentence undoubtedly must prevail in law, because what the unmarried daughter has in her father's goods is a legitimate portion owed to her by the law of nature, she cannot take advantage of said statute, although her married sister is found to have had more in her dowry for some time, because the statute in its second clause, disposing that inheritance be the same for descendants in the female line, expressly says if the ascendant does not have a male or males in the male line, but in the present case he left several sons. Whence if the words of the statute do not suit the case, the statutory disposition also must not fit.⁶⁹

The statute was "odious" in the eyes of *ius commune* and in need of a restrictive reading because it interfered with the power of an ascendent to leave what he wanted to whom he wanted. As there were sons, the statute excluded women from inheritance and left them only dowries set by their father in response to what was needed to arrange the marriage of the older girl, in this case.

In another case Maino encountered another of Milan's inheritance provisions, namely that a husband could leave his wife a fourth of his goods. Could sons as heirs of the husband extract their legitima before the wife took that fourth? Did the statute's allowance to deduct *aes alienum* (debts) apply? Maino determined that legitima was not *aes alienum*. While it was true that legitima could not be reduced by bequests or gifts from the estate, it was not a debt. It was merely *quasi debita* and it was not truly a loss.⁷⁰ During his life a father was not in debt to his sons the way he was to his creditors. So the attempt of these sons to limit even more the quarter that fell to their mother was thwarted by the jurist. Here one senses that the gendered association of father and sons worked to make sure sons faced all the obligations their father had, including to their mother.

Finally we can consider a later case of Mariano Sozzini junior (1482–1556), written in Bologna in 1553 but concerning a Milanese family. Oldrado de Lampugnano made a will in 1507 in favor of his son Ferrando, substituting in *fideicommissum* his brother and his wife, should Ferrando have no male issue.

69 Ibid.: "contrariam sententiam arbitror proculdubio de iure prevalere, quod ex quo filia innupta habet in bonis paternis legitimam sibi debitam iure nature, quod non possit se iuvare beneficio dicti statuti, per hoc quod soror sua nupta longe plus in dotem habere reperiatur, eo quia statutum in secundo capite disponens ut idem sit in descendantibus ex linea foeminina expresse loquitur, si ascendens non reliquerit masculum vel masculos ex linea masculina, sed in casu praesenti reliquerat plures filios masculos. Unde si non conveniunt verba statuti non debet etiam convenire dispositio statutaria."

70 Maino, *Consilia*, vol. 2, pp. 597–599, at p. 598.

This was confirmed by a codicil of 1527. Ferrando had since married and had a daughter, Teodolida, who was the apple of her grandfather's eye.⁷¹ So later Oldrado had another will made, again naming Ferrando and observing the forms of Milanese law, but with no mention of the previous will. There were new clauses, such as a bequest to monna Ambrosia (the daughter-in-law?). Oldrado died eight months later. Ferrando took the estate and enjoyed it for ten years until his death in 1537, leaving two daughters, Octavia and Lucretia (Teodolida presumably had died). Ferrando's paternal cousins then claimed his property on the basis of the *fideicommissum* in the first will.

After extensive examination, Sozzini took the line that what Oldrado had executed in the codicil rose to the character of a new testament. The main point in favor was that in 1527 he had done something absolutely essential for a testament; he had named an heir. He had however not restated or reinstituted the fideicommissary substitution in favor of his brother and his line. That Oldrado wanted to quash the first will and make a new one was supported by various arguments, including

when the testator saw the wife of his son and his daughter-in-law bore a daughter, he knew that she was not sterile but fertile, and so loving the progeny of his son (as most great is the love of old men for their grandchildren) (...) he did not want to place any burden on his son and deservedly in his last will (as Lord Oldrado asserted) he did not want to make any substitution to this child.⁷²

Oldrado had faith that his fertile daughter-in-law would also produce more children and he no longer had to fear that a bastard would inherit. Just as he did not renew the substitution in 1527, he did not repeat the clauses forbidding alienation of property *extra familiam*. This testator was taken to be deeply attached to his own progeny, even female, like a doting grandfather. In the end, in Sozzini's eyes, against the masculine bias of the statutes, property here went to women on the largely presumed intent of the testator. On into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries fathers still directed property to their daughters or

⁷¹ Mariano Sozzini, *Consilia*, 5 vols. (Venice, 1571), vol. 4, fols. 117r–20r, at 117ra.

⁷² Ibid., fol. 119rb: "Et ista opinio suadetur quia cum testator iam viderit uxorem filii et sic nurum suam peperisse filiam cognovit eam non esse sterilem sed fertilem, et ita diligens prolem filii sui (cum maximus sit amor senuum in nepotes suos ex filio [...]) noluit onus aliquod filio imponere, et merito in hac sua ultima et bona voluntate (uti eam d. Oldradus asseruit) noluit ipsi filio aliquam substitutionem facere."

their children in the absence of direct male heirs.⁷³ Inheritance had to respond to economic imperatives, rather than the ideology of patrilineage at times, as a house was occasionally more reliant on cognatic ties through women than men's agnatic connections.⁷⁴

Agency

As Simona Feci insists, beyond women's proprietary rights, we should "dare risalto piuttosto ai rapporti di forza che le prerogative patrimoniali di ogni membro della parentela creano all'interno delle famiglie."⁷⁵ Having property was one thing, using it another; and here too men and women were not equal. An ideology of *fragilitas* or *imbecillitas* could be invoked in juristic discourse to underwrite discriminations against women, but by and large statutes did not strike such notes.⁷⁶ Instead, women's actions were linked to their roles and status as daughters, mothers, wives, and widows.⁷⁷ Women were not projected simply as women, for then they truly were fish out of water (a jurist's coinage, it turns out).⁷⁸

The Bolognese legist Rolandino Passaggieri (d. 1300) declared that adult women would regularly enter into their own contracts without anyone's consent.⁷⁹ Yet the jurist Angelo degli Ubaldi (1323–1400), looking at statutes rather than just *ius commune*, remarked that throughout Italy women could not enter into contracts without the consent of men—either their close kin or, as in Florence, some appointed *mundualdus*.⁸⁰ In fact, as there was no attached liability to the male guardian who gave his consent to a Florentine woman's acts, it is an open question as to how much influence he exercised in any one occasion.⁸¹ Given the shared heritage of Lombard law, from which the *mundualdus* arose, it is striking that Milan did not have it. Such statutory limitations on female agency proliferated in the fifteenth century and remained in force for centuries.⁸²

73 For examples, see Porqueddu, pp. 41–42, 65–71.

74 Porqueddu, p. 63.

75 Feci, p. 11.

76 Some did: cf. Feci, pp. 46–49.

77 Kuehn, "Daughters, Mothers, Wives, and Widows," passim; Feci, p. 15.

78 Feci, p. 14.

79 Kuehn, *Law, Family, and Women*, p. 216.

80 Feci, p. 25.

81 Kuehn, *Law, family, and Women*, pp. 233–237.

82 Feci, pp. 61–64; Ferente p. 366.

As Serena Ferente has pointed out, women at times were in a powerful position and their agency was used even in pursuit of the same strategies that otherwise called for their subordination.⁸³ The daily needs of the household meant, if nothing else, that there was tacitly an arena of female agency in the markets. Women could contract debts, in Milan as elsewhere, which also implicated their husbands, in those expenses that arose from the *onera matrimonii* and the women's own physical needs; as for food, clothing, and domestic goods.⁸⁴ Women proved capable administrators of their own property, when possessed of such, or of household property, when left to manage it. Law generally kept the potential to use the limited capacity of any of its members (minors as well as women) where necessity or opportunity offered, for the good of the family.⁸⁵

Feci argues that in contrast to the basic uniformity of statutes regulating female inheritance in all sorts of places, there was great diversity regarding female agency. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, few places had laws addressing female legal capacity.⁸⁶ Milan fit that description. The 1216 statute *De venditionibus et emptionibus*, which carried the subtitle *De re paterna tuenda*, made references to agnates who could reclaim sold property at the same price. No woman could try to buy back property unless she was *coniunta* by a male.

By 1396 there was a much more robust stance taken concerning female capacities. One area of concern for Milan, as for Florence and elsewhere, was to keep dowries of wives distinct from the obligations of husbands.⁸⁷ One curious way this played out in Milan was the rule that a woman's clothing and bed and chests (*cassoni*), whether dotal or paraphernal, could not be pledged for a debt of any sort, even for rent of one's house, unless the debts were truly hers.⁸⁸ This clause was repeated in 1498.

A married woman who wanted to sue someone, first had to satisfy the other party through witnesses or by common repute (*fama*) that if she lost in the case she could make satisfaction.⁸⁹ Here the equation between property and the ability to act in law is strikingly clear, as is the presumption that a woman did not control property as a rule. That presumption was practically codified in another rubric which stated that whatever a married woman gained/earned

83 Ferente, pp. 365–366.

84 Zorzoli, "Incursione," p. 630.

85 Ibid., pp. 641–642.

86 Feci, pp. 29–39.

87 Kuehn, "Person and Gender," p. 97.

88 Trivulziana B 1, fol. 149v.

89 Trivulziana B 1, fol. 108r–v.

(i.e., not dowry) was understood to belong to her husband and be subject to claims of his creditors.⁹⁰ Bergamo similarly had seen fit to clarify that any property of a married woman was held to belong to her husband, unless it were proven that it came to her by inheritance or gift.⁹¹

A sequence of rules regarded the cession of a woman's rights to fulfill debts or obligations, that was concerned with the possibilities of fraud and the need to provide valid legal documents. The cession of dowry by a woman to a debt-ridden husband or father-in-law required the consent of two other men, agnates, or lacking them, cognates, or lacking them, two "good men" of the neighborhood, who

must place their hand on the holy Gospels of the one scripture [and swear] that in truth they believe what is being ceded by that woman is by her will and that however much money that is received because of this cession must be converted into extinguishing of the aforesaid [debts] or be lodged in a safe place so that that woman may remain secure during marriage, otherwise a cession not adhering to this form will not hold nor will it prejudice that woman.⁹²

She could not bail out her struggling husband on her own, seemingly in keeping with legal presumptions that women could be competent and even avaricious pursuers of their own interests but weak targets of the interests of others. Those kin or neighbors who swore to the integrity of the act were supposed to be protecting her. Milanese law restricted women's ability to harm themselves unwittingly by alienating or ceding their dowry, yet it also allowed such a move when it seemed, in male estimation, sensible. Otherwise women could transact, but in the knowledge that whatever they acquired (beyond dowry) fell into the ownership, if not possession, of their husbands, sons, or grandsons. At Novara there was a law that limited a woman's legal capacity to dispose of property to the detriment of sons or descendants. But if she were wife to

⁹⁰ B 1, fol. 152r-v.

⁹¹ *Lo statuto di Bergamo del 1331*, ed. Claudia Stroti Storchi (Milan, 1986), p. 192.

⁹² B 1, fol. 178v: "teneantur ad sancta dei evangelia manu corporali unius scripturis quod in veritate credunt predictum que fieri per dictam mulierem cedere ad voluntatem ipsius mulieris et quod pecunia que recipiatur cause dicte cessionis quantum contingent fieri debeat converti in evitionem predictorum vel in tuto loco reponi ut ipsa dicta mulier sit salva saltem constante matrimonio, aliter cessione non servata dicta forma non valeat nec ipsi mulieri preiudicet."

someone in exile, banned from the city, she was free to dispose of things as she saw fit (“ad sensum suum”).⁹³

The rubric of 1498 concerning prevention of fraud grew to sixteen chapters, several of which touched on women. We have already encountered some of these rules. One specified that any dowry not paid out until two years or more after the marriage did not harm creditors.⁹⁴ Also open to creditors were any gains realized on a wife’s money. While her dowry, parapherna, and any other property clearly hers was reserved to her, all profits were considered to be her husband’s and thus available to satisfy his debts. Any gifts or settlements by him to her, which were regularly invalid by *ius commune* in any case, were not to prejudice his creditors.⁹⁵

Following a husband’s death, the *acquisti* on a wife’s property went to her children (favoring sons to the exclusion of daughters) or grandchildren, if she lived with them or at least one of them. If the woman remarried, she could not take her dowry to her new husband with conditions that hurt the claims of children by her first marriage.⁹⁶ These statutes about creditors and fraud assumed either complicity between spouses to keep their assets or compliance of the wife in a husband’s machinations. Typically they were stringent, notably so in the face of bankruptcy (*fallimento, cessatio*), which threatened to leave creditors high and dry.⁹⁷ It was the wife’s ability, especially in the noble houses of Lombardy, to support and even display her husbands’ wealth, to manage debts and obtain credit, that served a household’s honor and creditworthiness.⁹⁸

The key provision of 1498 regarding women’s agency lay in a subrubric *De solemnitatibus in alienationibus et obligationibus mulierum observandis*, which specified that any contractual alienation or renunciation by a woman of a value of ten *lire* or more had to have the consent of her husband. If she were not married, if her husband was not in town, or if the contract was with him, then the right of consent fell to an agnate of the same *parentela* and cognomen, not otherwise involved in the transaction. The husband or agnate involved in a transaction had to swear “that in truth he believed the alienation, obligation,

93 Niccolai, p. 14.

94 *Statuta*, fol. 61r.

95 *Statuta*, fol. 61r–v.

96 *Ibid.*, fols. 61v–62r.

97 Patrizia Mainoni, “L’attività mercantile e le casate milanesi nel secondo Quattrocento,” in *Milano nell’età di Ludovico il Moro*, vol. 2, 575–584, at p. 581.

98 Evelyn Welch, “Women in Debt: Financing Female Authority in Renaissance Italy,” in *Donne di potere nel Rinascimento*, ed. Letizia Arcangeli and Susanna Peyronel (Rome, 2008), pp. 45–65; also Porqueddu, pp. 295–306, for the later period.

sale, renunciation, contract, or quasi contract, or settlement, as above, works to the utility of the woman.”⁹⁹ If there were no agnates, or they did not want to proffer their consent, then a judge could authorize the woman’s alienation. Here then the state, in the form of the Sforza duchy but later too as the Spanish domain, inserted itself into family relations, even establishing a direct tie with women who could take advantage to act to the benefit of their family as they saw it.

Most forms of potential action by a wife or widow would seem to have fallen under such terms. One that did not, but was at least treated separately, was the attempt by a wife to retrieve her dowry from a husband “who had begun to misuse his wealth.”¹⁰⁰ This provision made such retrieval much more difficult than it was in Florence, where a woman did not have to involve others at all, leave alone interested relatives. In consequence Florence saw regular recourse to *consignatio dotis* and had to wrestle with problems of publicizing such dowry settlements. But other Lombard cities also allowed retrieval of dowry from a husband whose finances were floundering. Pavia even allowed a woman to regain her dowry if her husband were absent from the city for ten years, notably equating that ability not to a presumption of his death but “as if she had proven that her husband was verging on bankruptcy” (“ac si probasset maritum vergisset ad inopiam”).¹⁰¹

Milan was hardly peculiar in wanting to protect the property that was seen as the mainstay of female welfare from a husband’s debts. Cremona too prevented women from alienating dotal property without spousal permission but also allowed wives to defend their dowries from their husbands’ creditors.¹⁰² Still, and paradoxically, Florence seems to have had more faith in a woman’s ability to conceive and pursue a strategy that would work for her than Milan did. Florence certainly did not require anyone to certify that funds returned from a dowry would be used to purchase assets to support a woman, leave alone have that someone be an interested relative.

Zorzoli sees the limits on female legal capacity as part of a protection of family patrimony:

99 *Statuta*, fol. 73r–v: “quod in veritate credit alienationem, obligationem, venditionem, renunciationem, contractum, vel quasi, aut distractum, ut supra, cedere ad utilitatem ipsius mulieris.”

100 *Statuta*, fol. 102v, under the larger rubric *De extraordinariis civilium*.

101 Niccolai, p. 16.

102 *Statuta et ordinamenta comunis Cremonae facta et compilata currente anno domini mccccxxix*, ed. Ugo Gualazzini (Milan, 1952), pp. 141–142, 153.

E solo quando la donna è vista nella prospettiva di 'moglie' la sua autonomia in campo giuridico è decisamente affermata come necessariamente controllabile e comprimibile, sino al limite della dissoluzione: l'interesse della famiglia e del suo patrimonio non può ammettere possibilità di aperture.¹⁰³

As this implies, the widow was different, as her subordination was no longer needed for the sake of a family, and she was no longer "naturally" weak and ignorant.¹⁰⁴ Undeniably widows had more legal capacity and more reason to act. A widow retained the rights of usufruct spelled out in Milan's statutes, as well as her own property, so she had interests to pursue. But her acts would also tend to the unity and preservation of the family and often included guardianship of children, in humble and great families alike.¹⁰⁵ The capacities of widows were likewise crucial in other Lombard communities, as Porqueddu has copiously illustrated for Pavia.¹⁰⁶ It was the necessity of family, in the end, that underwrote both the restriction and relaxation of female legal incapacity.

Baldo degli Ubaldi (1327–1400) dealt with a Milanese case in which a widow remarried. To do so she sought a decree from a judge, giving her as equivalent of her dowry some property of her first husband, although not in accord with the terms of Milan's statutes. Her first husband's kin agreed to return the dowry (to retrieve their judicially lost assets), on condition that they be formally absolved of the duty to return her dowry. However, they took so long to do so that the profit earned on the dowry substitute during the interval equaled its total worth. So the first husband's kin sought to retrieve their property on the basis of the realized return. Baldo found it a difficult issue, for although the woman may have received proceeds, it had not really been compensation to her so much as to her second husband for the *onera matrimonii* incurred in the interval.¹⁰⁷ Nonetheless, while Baldo conceded a sense of fairness in these dealings between men of two families about a woman's dowry, he was also intent on preserving the woman's dowry rights, which in this case meant enforcing Milan's statute. The ratification of the dowry transfer did not stand because the woman had not consented to it. Baldo further agreed that the dowry should remain with the wife as the obligation for it remained.

103 Zorzoli, "Incursione nella pratica giurisprudenziale," pp. 634–647 (quotation pp. 646–647).

104 Ibid., p. 643.

105 Benedetto Borello, "Protezioni di donne: Mogli aristocratiche e patriziato cittadino (Gubbio, Roma, Siena xv–xvi secolo)," in *Donne di potere*, pp. 223–45, at 242–243.

106 Porqueddu, pp. 247–258, 285–295.

107 Baldo degli Ubaldi, *Consilia* (Venice, 1575; facsimile ed., Turin, 1970), vol. 1, fols. 90v–91r.

In sum a woman had gone to court against dilatory heirs to her deceased husband to get her dowry in order to remarry. She had not consented to accept *fructus* in lieu of her own dotal assets, so the mere agreement between the first and second families could not prejudice her rights. Milan's statutory protections were upheld.

In contrast to the actions of this widow stood those of a young bride in regard to her father. This case caught Giason del Maino's attention early in his career, 23 December 1474. Lancellotto della Croce had a wife named Caterina and they had two girls. Following Caterina's death and three years later that of a seven-year-old daughter, Lancellotto emancipated the other girl, Chiara. A month later she "freed" him from all obligations on her mother's estate, with agnates present and swearing that it was to her benefit, in accordance with Milan's statute. Lancellotto even had that act repeated before two more notaries and three witnesses. That same day Chiara was married with a 750 florin dowry from her father. Two legal doubts remained: was Lancellotto or Chiara the real heir to the dead sister, and was the instrument of release from Chiara to her father truly valid?

It is not entirely clear who raised these issues. It may have been Chiara's husband or her family, desirous to claim more wealth for her. It might have been creditors of Lancellotto. There clearly were other interests in play, and they had engaged Maino to grapple with the legal issues.¹⁰⁸ The first resolved itself fairly easily. The only way Chiara inherited her sister's half was if it was in fact a question of inheriting from her mother. There was no question that she inherited from her mother, but Milan's statute privileged the ascendant male, here clearly the father. And as Lancellotto became heir to his one daughter, her property ceased to be distinct but merged into his patrimony. It was no longer the *hereditas* of the long-deceased mother.

Chiara asserted, without contradiction from her father or anyone else, that she was her sister's heir. Maino dismissed that as a legally meaningless assertion. A more complex claim was that Chiara had been acting in the presence of her father and thus swayed by reverence and fear could not have freely consented to release him from obligations on her mother's estate. Bartolo da Sassoferrato (1313–1357), Baldo, and Antonio da Butrio (1338–1408) had addressed questions about the reverential fear a father could generate in a daughter. Revealingly, in terms of Milan's statutes, they had admitted that the presence of others might allay the issue of fear. Yet even Milan's reliance on consent of other kin might not obviate fear when the father was concerned.¹⁰⁹ Maino took the opposite

¹⁰⁸ Maino, *Consilia*, vol. 1, pp. 17–24.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22a.

view and argued to validate Chiara's release to her father. First, "because reverence alone of the husband, or bishop, or even father, and merely reverential fear of them, and only their presence, are not enough to have to rescind an act undertaken by a wife or daughter or for rescinding the consent proffered by them, unless there intervene threats or blows."¹¹⁰ There were no recorded overt threats or blows in this case. The *liberatio* had otherwise followed the form and procedure laid out in the statutes.¹¹¹ Even more this emancipated daughter immediately was dowered and married and had reason to liberate her father and declare herself satisfied, "as in law a father cannot be held even by a judge to dower a daughter who has wealth from which she can be dowered [that being her share of her mother's property]."¹¹² Against the argument that her declaration of satisfaction was simulated, fictive, and of no effect, Maino declared "that rather said satisfaction appears from the gift and handing over of *parapherna* immediately following. And in truth that rests on the greatest equality, for which a judge must greatly strain his eyes."¹¹³

On either count, by the statute giving the father preference over the sister or by the validity of the *liberatio*, Lancellotto was in full possession of half of what his wife had left (the share of the dead daughter). For our purposes it is also interesting how high Maino set the bar to invalidate the daughter's proper legal act. He contemplated not respectful fear of one's parent but rather a girl's gratitude.

Conclusions

Maino's *consilium* touched on a problem Feci identified. Women's acts were essentially uncertain, even when the presence of a male served to make up for the deficiencies in a woman's legal persona.¹¹⁴ The disparity between women and men in the reigning gender ideology left those dealing with women worried about the firmness of such legal acts and trusting in the requisite formalities of notarized procedure. That women were a shield or instrument for the

110 Ibid., p. 22b: "quia sola reverentia viri, vel episcopi, vel etiam patris, et solus eorum timor reverentialis et sola eorum praesentia non sufficiunt ad faciendum rescindi actum gestum per uxorem vel filiam vel ad rescindendum consensum per eas praestitum nisi inter-
venerint minae vel verberae."

111 Ibid., p. 23a.

112 Ibid., p. 23a.

113 Ibid.: "quod immo de dicta satisfactione apparet ex donatione et paraphernalium traditione immediate sequentibus. Et in veritate istud nititur summa aequitate, ad quam iudex debet multum intendere oculos."

114 Feci, pp. 142–152.

interests of kin and husbands also led to concern with threats, an issue Maino had addressed and refuted.¹¹⁵ Thus the result Feci finds in Parma could as well stand for Milan or Florence:

le solennità statutarie, che sono ideate per la tutela delle contraenti, complicano la stipula, prestano il fianco a ipotesi di nullità del contratto, generano una grande incertezza ed espongono la controparte a frodi imbastite dalle donne e dai loro familiari. Anche se non si arriva a questo punto estremo, la procedura di formalizzazione-che è richiesta dalle parti per dare solidità e sicurezza all'accordo-concorre piuttosto alla persistente instabilità del atto.¹¹⁶

Women's status really changed at marriage, and their acts as wives were of concern to their husbands and to local laws.¹¹⁷ Their stature during marriage was not changed by the canon law reforms enacted at the Council of Trent.¹¹⁸ Wives were left to the control of their husbands, who used them and their property as they needed. When women lost their husbands and entered widowhood, they had need of legal acts for their own well being and that of their children.

Still, law is not a separate, singular, and clear set of rules, and unexpected outcomes are not solely a product of social factors outside the law. Judges, legislators, and jurists knew that women had control and access to property, even though they could not own or control it in some areas of law. Likewise they knew that heads of households were not always and everywhere successful and adept at their role. They recognized, however implicitly, that

the point was to keep the property where it belonged, not to uphold property rights (...). The point was to keep flagrant abuses of power in check so that households did not fall apart, not to attend to the individual rights of either household heads or dependents.¹¹⁹

115 Feci, pp. 161–170.

116 Feci, p. 100.

117 Kuehn, "Daughters, Mothers, Wives, and Widows," p. 103.

118 Lombardi, pp. 129–142; Eisenach, pp. 1–38; and the essays in *Coniugi nemici: La separazione in Italia dal xii al xviii secolo*, ed. Silvana Seidel Menchi and Diego Quaglioni (Bologna, 2000).

119 Laura F. Edwards, "The Peace: The Meaning and Production of Law in the Post-Revolutionary United States," *UC Irvine Law Review* 1, no. 3 (Sept. 2011) [Symposium Issues: "Law As . . .": Theory and Method in Legal History], 565–585, at p. 573.

Jurists could see to household peace and solidarity, even at points of conflict. Their determinations would simply become part of an eventual settlement restoring familial peace.¹²⁰

The opportunity for litigation was always present, and conflict did not preclude solidarity. Law operated with the contradiction of preserving families and patrimonies through rights and prerogatives ascribed to individuals.¹²¹ Acts emerging as harmful to family could be marginalized as individual, or, in the case of women, acts of ignorance and weakness. In parallel a *fideicommissum* could be invoked *a posteriori* to nullify an alienation by one person in the name of the controlling vision of another as testator.¹²² The law made supposedly weak and fragile women, who already moved between a family of origin and a family of marriage, into the ultimate legal individual (not the ultimate legal persona). The point was most clear in another aphorism that a woman was the beginning and end of her family (*mulier familiae suae et caput et finis est*), as she could not hold *patria potestas* and thus not pass on agnation.¹²³

The dotal system also meant that a wife's property was separate from her husband's, and statutes further maintained that distinction by keeping her from covering his debts or him from appropriating her property to pay creditors. The consequence was also some opportunity for friction between a widow and the husband's heirs (most often her children) over provisions for her dowry and widowhood.¹²⁴ Jurists and judges, as legislators, were aware of the need to protect women and their dowries and non-dotal goods. Daughters and mothers might otherwise starve and lack dowries for their own marriages or more shamefully have to resort to a dishonest lifestyle.¹²⁵

We have only looked at statutes and cases. It must fall to others to examine sources like letters to see if Milanese couples enjoyed and developed the sort of marital relationship Carolyn James has recently evoked in her study

120 Cf. François-Joseph Ruggiu, "Pour préserver la paix des familles . . . : Les querelles successorales et leurs réglemens au xviii^e siècle," in *La justice des familles*, pp. 137–163.

121 Cf. Zorzoli, "Incursione," pp. 621–622.

122 A point Zorzoli makes, *ibid.*, p. 653.

123 As per Mariano Sozzini senior to X. 5.37.12, *Commentaria super secunda parte libri quinti decretalium* (Venice, 1593), fol. 207ra. The aphorism is contained in D. 50.16.195.

124 Christine Dousset, "Au risque du veuvage: Veuves et conflits familiaux dans les mémoires judiciaires du Parlement de Toulouse à la fin du xviii^e siècle," in *La justice des familles*, 207–225.

125 A set of arguments marshalled by the jurist Raffaele Fulgosio (1367–1427) in a *consilium*, cited by Danusso, "La donna e i feudi," p. 229.

of Isabella d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga.¹²⁶ Chiara Porqueddu's thorough study of the Pavese patriciate is certainly an excellent start. Accounts, notarial records, family papers—they all cast lights from different angles on the lives of women and men. What we can say is that legal sources allow us to see Milanese women's functional utility to their families.

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126 Carolyn James, "Marriage by Correspondence: Politics and Domesticity in the Letters of Isabella d'Este and Francesco Gonzaga, 1490–1519," *Renaissance Quarterly* 65 (2012), 321–352.

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The Politics of Law

Jane Black

The Visconti Signoria: Construction of a Regime

The Visconti regime was an experiment on a grand scale: there was no accepted historical or legal tradition to support its authority. The ruling family had to identify for themselves the precedents that would best legitimize their position. The Visconti improvised brilliantly, appropriating norms that had been devised for other sorts of government—the traditions of the emperor himself, the particular rights of Italian cities, and the principles of popular sovereignty—all were exploited to guarantee the regime a working relationship with its subjects and a right to rule. Partners in the enterprise were lawyers, who manipulated the principles of *ius commune* (i.e. Roman, canon and feudal law) and local law to establish a new kind of dominion.

The key to authority was identified as control over statutes, a right demanded by the Visconti from all their cities.¹ Initially it was the Milanese who in 1329 gave Azzone Visconti comprehensive rights over the contents of local law, including the ability to “abolish and cancel statutes wholly or in part, to add and remove clauses and to modify, supplement, correct, interpret or explain them as he saw fit, just as the commune of Milan can.”² Similarly, in Vercelli “whatever he decreed was to be considered the commune’s law;”³ in Como he

1 On Azzone’s statute revisions see Federica Cengarle, “Il reato politico contro la *civitas* come crimine di lesa maestà in due statuti cittadini dell’età di Azzone Visconti (Como, 1335; Piacenza, 1336),” in *Medioevo dei poteri. Studi di storia per Giorgio Chittolini*, ed. Maria Nadia Covini, Massimo Della Misiordia, Andrea Gamberini, and Francesco Somaini (Rome, 2012), pp. 55–75, esp. pp. 63–73.

2 “ea in toto vel in parte cassandi, irritandi, et eis addendi, minuendi, mutandi, supplendi, corrigendi, interpretandi et declarandi secundum quod ei videbitur expedire et ut posset comune Mediolani.” (F. Cognasso, “Note e documenti sulla formazione dello stato visconteo,” *Bollettino della Società Pavese della Storia Patria*, 23 (1923), pp. 23–169; here p. 126.)

3 “quicquid decreverit . . . sit . . . lex comunis Vercellarum.” (*Statuta communis Vercellarum ab anno mcccxli*, ed. Giovan Battista Adriani in *Historiae patriae monumenta*, 16, *Leges municipales*, 2, pt 1, cols 1089–1584 (Turin, 1876); here col. 1503.)

was allowed “to act by himself or through others in passing laws.”⁴ The Visconti’s insistence on the right to modify communal statutes shows their desire to manipulate what was then the bedrock of law. Their purpose was revealed in a steady stream of new and reissued local statutes:⁵ Azzone ordered revisions in Milan (1330), Cremona (1335–9), Bergamo (1333), Como (1335), and Monza (c.1335); Giovanni and Luchino did the same in Vercelli (1341), Bobbio (1342), Parma (1347), Alessandria (1347), Milan (1348 and 1351), Bologna (1351), and Bergamo (1353). Of the next generation Galeazzo II, who governed the western half of the dominion, was content to confirm existing laws; but Bernabò called for revisions in his main centres (Brescia 1355, Cremona 1355–6, Bergamo 1371), and probably elsewhere. Giangaleazzo was no less energetic, requiring revised statutes in, among other places, Cremona, Vigevano, Galliate, Treviglio, Verona, Lodi and Milan.

The Visconti had entered a contract with these cities that allowed them to issue acts that were legally binding. And yet the transfer of such comprehensive powers to an outsider had implications that remained to be explored. The first jurist to wrestle with this side of Visconti rule was the Bergamasc expert, Alberico da Rosciate (c. 1290–1360), who worked for the regime on several high-level diplomatic missions in the 1330s and 1340s.⁶ For him the chief reservoir of legislative powers remained the commune. Communal rights were based, in part, on the Peace of Constance of 1183, in which Emperor Frederick I had granted effective independence to the Lombard cities. That agreement, according to Alberico, put contemporary communes on a par with the ancient world’s most senior administrative unit—the province.⁷ In addition, cities could rely on the law “*Omnes populi*”, located at the beginning of the *Digest*,

4 “*bailiam . . . per se vel alios . . . leges condendi.*” (*Statuti di Como del 1335 volumen magnum*, ed. Guido Manganelli, 2 vols. (Como. 1936–45), 1, p. 17).

5 See Luisa Chiappa Mauri, “Statuti rurali e autonomie locali in Lombardia (XIII–XIV secolo),” in *Contado e città in dialogo. Comuni urbani e comunità rurali nella Lombardia medievale*, ed. eadem (Milan, 2003), pp. 227–68; here pp. 235–41.

6 Alberico visited the papal court in Avignon on the Visconti’s behalf in 1335, 1337–8 and 1340–41: see the entry in the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* by Luigi Prosdocimi.

7 *Commentariorum de statutis libri IIII*, in *Tractatus Illustrium . . . Iurisconsultorum*, 2 (Venice, 1584), ff. 2–85 Bk 3, *questio* 2, nr 9, f. 55^r: “The cities of Italy, especially those in Lombardy, which were part of the Peace of Constance, have a claim to fiscal rights—jurisdiction is divided into cities, as it was at one time into provinces (Constat autem civitates Italiae et maxime Lombardia quae fuerunt in pace Constantiae, sibi vindicare iura fiscalia, et iurisdictiones per civitates esse divisas, sicut olim erat per provincias ut C. *De praescriptione longi temporis*, lex finalis [C. 7, 33, 12] et ibi notavi et dixi).”

that ostensibly gave people the right to live by their own statutes.⁸ In one of his major works, *De statutis*, Alberico analysed the status of local law, regulating as it did the key elements of family and commercial relations. Locally it took precedence over common law: as Alberico put it, "On the question of whether cities can pass statutes against common law, the accepted view, and the one that is followed in practice, is that they may do so by the law 'Omnes populi'."⁹

The problem was how to accommodate Visconti rule in this scheme. Alberico's solution was to equate the Visconti, not with monarchs, but with cities. Just like the communes, their ability to legislate had its basis in the law "Omnes populi".¹⁰ Signori were coupled with autonomous communes: "the emperor granted both of them authority and statute-making powers through the law 'Omnes populi'."¹¹ Alberico, in other words, refused to recognize the Visconti as quasi-emperors in their possessions.

His analysis of the process of law making was similarly conservative. In *De statutis* he outlined the possible routes by which communal statutes could be passed: a proposal could be put to the general assembly by the podestà, which would then require majority support; that method was now rare, he said. Alternatively, city councils could suggest a measure which would become law if it had the approval of the podestà; but that too was out of date. By then local legislation had for the most part been removed from its popular roots to become the preserve of lawyers, with statute-drafting entrusted to a committee

8 "All peoples who are governed by laws and customs use partly their own law and partly that which is common to all mankind (Omnes populi, qui legibus et moribus reguntur, partim suo proprio, partim communi omnium hominum iure utuntur [D. 1, 1, *De iustitia et iure*, 9])."

9 *Commentarii in prima . . . Codicis partem* (Venice, 1586; reprinted Bologna, 1979), on C. 1, 26, 2 (*De officio praefecti praetorio orientis*, l. "Formam alias normam"): "Utrum civitates possint facere statuta contra ius commune . . . communis opinio habet, et de facto ubicunque servatur, quod sic, per legem "Omnes populi", ff. *De iustitia et iure* [D. 1, 1, 9]."

10 In his discussion of Luchino Visconti's decree forbidding the sale of land to outsiders (*De statutis*, Bk 2, *quaestio* 2, nr 30, f. 29^r), Alberico wrote that the decree was valid 'as is shown by the power granted to cities regarding the passing of statutes in accordance with the law 'Omnes populi' (Idem probatur ex potestate concessa civitatibus super statutis condendis ut l. "Omnes populi", *De iustitia et iure* [D. 1.1.9])'; see Storti Storchi "Aspetti generali della legislazione statutaria lombarda in et. viscontea," in *Legislazione e società dell'Italia medievale per il VII centenario degli statuti di Albenga 1288*, (Bordighera, 1990), pp. 71–101; here pp. 81–2.

11 Alberico *De statutis* 3, *Quaestio* 19, nr 4, f. 57^v: 'Et idem dicerem de quibuscunque civitatibus et dominis habentibus merum et mistum imperium ab imperio . . . Nam imperator concedendo eis merum imperium et potestatem condendi statuta per l. "Omnes populi", ff. *De iustitia et iure* [D. 1, 1, 9].'

of experts. Alberico himself was a member of one such panel.¹² But his account of legislative procedure did not in fact mirror contemporary practice, because he omitted to mention what had now become the final stage of the process—approval by the *signore*.¹³ The need for approval would appear to contradict the basic principle of peoples' right to live by their own laws, so that Alberico refers to approval only in a subsidiary context: did rejection by the *signore* of one statute imply confirmation of all the rest? He believed it did, appearing to accept the principle of approval, but making little of it.

It was only slowly that jurists acknowledged that the Visconti were princes and could legislate on their own authority. Signorolo degli Omodei (d. 1371) was involved in both teaching and government affairs in these years. He had been appointed by Archbishop Giovanni Visconti to help draft the Milanese statutes of 1351; in 1361 he was invited by Galeazzo II to inaugurate lectures in civil law at the new University of Pavia.¹⁴ Unlike Alberico, Signorolo was willing to concede that the Visconti enjoyed prerogatives that were outside the authority of the communes.¹⁵ "The will of this *signore* must be obeyed by his subjects" he wrote, "because, as it says in the *Institutes*, 'what pleases the prince has the force of law'."¹⁶ This was more than Alberico was willing to admit; nevertheless it was only an oblique reference, not a fundamental analysis.

12 *De statutis*, Bk 1, Quaestio 4, f. 2^v. Alberico helped draw up the statutes of Bergamo of 1331, compiled when the city found itself briefly under the control John of Bohemia; on Alberico's analysis see Diego Quaglioni, "Legislazione statutaria e dottrina della legislazione le 'Quaestiones statutorum' di Alberico da Rosciate," in "Civilis Sapientia": *Dottrine giuridiche e dottrine politiche fra Medioevo ed età moderna* (Rimini, 1989), pp. 35–75; here pp. 54–60. The role of professionals in the revision of the statutes of Pavia of 1393 is described by Gian Paolo Massetto, "La cultura giuridica civilista," in *Storia di Pavia*, ed. Banca del Monte di Lombardia, 3, pt 2 (Pavia, 1990), p. 506.

13 On the process of approval see Franca Leverotti, "Leggi del principe, leggi della città nel ducato visconteo-sforzesco," in *Signori, regimi signorili e statuti nel tardo medioevo*, ed. Rolando Dondarini, Gian Maria Varaniini, and Maria Venticelli (Bologna 2003), pp. 143–88 (also published by *Reti Medievali*); here pp. 144–6.

14 On Signorolo see Annalisa Belloni, "Signorolo Omodei e gli inizi della scuola giuridica pavese," *Bollettino della Società Pavese della Storia Patria*, 85 (1985), pp. 29–39 (for his teaching see p. 33); and Alessandro Lattes, "Due giureconsulti milanesi, Signorolo e Signorino degli Omodei," *Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere*, s. 2, 32 (1899), pp. 1017–45.

15 On Signorolo's concept of the Visconti regime, see Jane Black, *Absolutism in Renaissance Milan: Plenitude of Power under the Visconti and the Sforza 1329–1535* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 59ff.

16 *Consilia* (Milan, 1521), 70, "In quaestione vertente inter comune Parme," nr 22: "Voluntatem predicti domini que inter suos subditos est servanda ut *Institutiones*, *De iure naturali, gentium et civili*, 'Sed quod principi [*Inst.* 1, 2, 6]' ". His consilium refers to a Visconti judgement

Not that the Visconti waited for the say-so of lawyers before assuming the role of sovereign legislators. Bernabò, Galeazzo II and Matteo II bought themselves an imperial vicariate in order to put their rights beyond question. The diploma granted to them by Emperor Charles IV in 1355, along with the one conceded by Wenceslas, king of the Romans, to Giangaleazzo in 1380,¹⁷ gave these rulers an overarching status that was independent of their subjects. In precise terms the vicariate gave the Visconti the imperial rights that Frederick I had retained for himself under the terms of the Peace of Constance (such as the authority to hear civil cases and appeals);¹⁸ unlike the vicariates held by their predecessors, these diplomas gave the Visconti a specific right to legislate. The prerogative, it should be noted, was still connected to the communes: the Visconti were empowered to “confirm, enact and revoke municipal laws and customs.”¹⁹ Whether a vicariate would provide independent legislative supremacy remained to be tested.

Armed with the rights of imperial vicar, Giangaleazzo embarked on a radical programme of law-making. A barrage of measures appeared in local statutes in the 1380s and 1390s covering administration, taxation, judicial procedure, criminal justice, and confiscations; food supplies were monitored, agricultural

in a dispute that is explained by Gero Dolezalek, “I commentari di Odofredo e Baldo alla Pace di Costanza”, in *La pace di Costanza*, (1983). *Un difficile equilibrio di poteri fra società italiana ed impero* (Bologna, 1984), pp. 59–75; here p. 63, n. 14. See also, with reference to Luchino, Signorolo’s *Consilium* 22 (“In quaestione vertente inter commune Mediolani”), nr 15 (last column), where he refers to him as a prince: “since we ought not to see the prince [i.e. Luchino], from whom the laws are handed down, as the author of injustice (Item cum principem, a quo iura descendunt, non debeamus intelligere esse actorem iniuriarum).”

17 The vicariate of 1355 is published in Caterina Santoro, *La politica finanziaria dei Visconti, Documenti*, 3 vols. (Milan 1976–83), 1, pp. 97–101; that of 1380 in Jean Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique du droit des gens*, 8 vols. (Amsterdam, 1726–31), 1, pp. 145–7.

18 On the significance of the powers handed over to the Visconti in the vicariates of 1355 and 1380, see Marie-Luise Favreau-Lilie, “Reichsherrschaft im spätmittelalterlichen Italien. Zur Handhabung des Reichsvikariates im 14./15. Jahrhundert”, in *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 80 (2000) pp. 53–116. On the issue of *iura reservata* and the imperial vicariate, see Francesco Ercole, *Dal comune al principato. Saggi sulla storia del diritto pubblico del Rinascimento italiano* (Florence, 1929) pp. 311–30.

19 “consuetudinum et iurium municipalium stabilitio, constitutio et revocatio” (Santoro, *La politica finanziaria*, 1, p. 100); a similar phrase occurs in Giangaleazzo’s vicariate (Dumont, *Corps*, 1, p. 146). See also Giacinto Romano, “Notizia di alcuni diplomi di Carlo IV imperatore relativi al vicariato visconteo,” *Rendiconti del Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere*, s. 2, 28 (1895), pp. 1072–84; and Black, *Absolutism*, pp. 52ff.

workers protected, and fortifications controlled.²⁰ The scope of his legislation was unprecedented. Giangaleazzo aimed to standardize the machinery of government and encourage a sense of solidarity among his subjects. The decrees show that he wanted to run the regime, not as a multiple signoria, with himself the head of each individual centre, but as a principality: whereas Alberico had assigned the status of province to separate cities, Giangaleazzo believed his dominions collectively formed a provincial unit.²¹

But many of his acts failed. That was the fate, for example, of the new procedure instituted in 1384 to make justice more accessible by excluding expensive lawyers in favour of a panel of three laymen, with no prospect of appeal.²² Two years later the right of appeal was reinstated, bringing the process back into lawyers' hands.²³ Similarly abandoned in the face of stiff resistance was the act that, in defiance of local statutes, authorized land transfers to citizens of other centres under Giangaleazzo's rule. The same outcome befell the decree issued on 19 July 1387 allowing property owners to pay taxes only to the city under whose jurisdiction they normally resided: that law was rescinded less than two years later.²⁴ These were major setbacks that revealed the strength of common law traditions and the power of local interests: the imperial vicariate had in theory given Giangaleazzo control over statutes but contemporary opinion was not on his side.

Giangaleazzo would have to wait until the last decade of the century to find a lawyer who was willing to interpret the vicariate in a way that would support his monarchical ambitions. In 1390 he persuaded Baldo degli Ubaldi to leave Perugia for Pavia, where he would spend the last ten years of his life teaching

20 The impressive body of decrees are only partially represented in *Antiqua ducum Mediolani decreta* (Milan, 1654); other acts can be found among local statutes and in private collections (see Leverotti, "Leggi del principe" pp. 168–77).

21 Federica Cengarle, "Le arenghe dei decreti viscontei (1330 ca.–1447): alcune considerazioni," in *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento*, ed. Andrea Gamberini and Giuseppe Petralia (Rome, 2007), pp. 55–87; here p. 76; the author quotes the phrase "in dicta provincia" from a decree of 21 September 1388.

22 *Antiqua ducum Mediolani decreta*, pp. 69–71.

23 *Antiqua ducum Mediolani decreta*, p. 89. On this act and its repeal see Claudia Storti Storchi, "Giudici e giuristi nelle riforme viscontee del processo civile per Milano (1330–1386)" in *Ius Mediolani. Studi di storia del diritto milanese offerti dagli allievi a Giulio Vismara* (Milan, 1996), pp. 47–187, especially pp. 152ff and 159.

24 These examples are highlighted by Andrea Gamberini, *Lo stato visconteo: linguaggi politici e dinamiche costituzionali* (Milan, 2005), pp. 149–50.

civil law and advising government.²⁵ It was a period that saw some of Baldo's most important works: the *Lectures on Feudal Customs*, the *Short Commentary on the Peace of Constance* and important political consilia. These writings had profound significance for Visconti authority: they demonstrated the regime's legal structure and supported Giangaleazzo's status as sovereign ruler. Some of the groundwork had been done by Baldo's brother, Angelo degli Ubaldi, also a professor of law, who expressly accepted Giangaleazzo's transcendent authority: "He is ruler in his lands and enjoys the power of a prince."²⁶ But it was Baldo who put meat into the vicariate. He believed that as imperial vicar "our glorious and illustrious prince enjoys in his numerous cities and provinces what his imperial highness not only entrusted but truly and completely consigned and literally handed over to him." As a consequence, "he has all the same powers as the emperor: a concession of the magnificent Giangaleazzo will enjoy the same privileges as an imperial concession because he wields Caesar's sword."²⁷

Possession of Caesar's sword had for Baldo tangible consequences in law, laying to rest any doubts about the quasi-regal status of the Visconti. With reference to Bernabò, he said, 'he is alleged to have been granted a vicariate by the emperor, as a result of which everyone is agreed that he could pass laws.'²⁸ He also accepted that local legislation had to be approved by the regime.²⁹

25 For details of Baldo's career see Maria Grazia Nico Ottaviani, "Su Baldo e Baldeschi: Scalvanti rivisitato," *Ius Commune. Zeitschrift für Europäische Rechtsgeschichte*, 27 (2000) (VI Centenario della morte di Baldo degli Ubaldi), pp. 27–68; for his relationship with Giangaleazzo see Mario Conetti, "Baldo e la politica viscontea. Appunti a *questiones e consilia*" in VI Centenario della morte di Baldo degli Ubaldi 1400–2000, ed. Carla Frova, Maria Grazia Nico Ottaviani, and Stefania Zucchini, (Perugia, 2005), pp. 473–52.

26 *Consilia* (Lyons, 1539), 217 ("In causa accusationis"), nrs 1–2: "Dominus comes in terris suis princeps est et principis fungitur potestate."

27 *Consiliorum sive responsorum* (Venice, 1575), Bk 3, 359 ("Quemadmodum imperator"), nrs 1–2: "Gloriosus et illustrissimus princeps habet... in nonnullis civitatibus et provinciis illud quod imperialis serenitas eidem non solum commisit sed vere ac plene concessit, quinimo transtulit ut ff. *De origine iuris*, l. 2, § novissime [D. 1, 2, 2]... Ex his sequuntur due conclusiones: una quod gloriosus dominus noster post principem habet omnem potestatem quam imperator... Secunda conclusio est quod... eadem privilegia habet concessio magnifici quam concessio Caesaris... quia vibrat ense Caesaris."

28 *Consiliorum*, Bk 1, 248 ("Quaeritur utrum donatio"), nr 1: "Dicitur etiam quod erat privilegiatus in vicariatu ab imperatore, ex quo omnibus constare videtur quod poterat legem statuere." Having been deprived of his diploma on the grounds of disloyalty on more than one occasion, Bernabò's status as imperial vicar was open to question.

29 *In primum, secundum et tertium Codicis libros* (Turin, 1576), on C. 1, 14, 8 (*De legibus et constitutionibus principum et edictis*, l. "Humanum"), nr 2: "I believe the people are able

In this context Baldo even dismissed the law “Omnes populi,” identified by earlier experts as the cornerstone communal rights. “It does not say there,” he wrote, “that every community can legislate it merely refers to those people who are governed by laws or customs of their own devising (‘who’ being used in a restrictive sense).”³⁰ The vicariate gave Giangaleazzo other privileges that traditionally applied only to the emperor: he could take advantage, for example, of the grossly unfair principle that his concessions were not susceptible to the legal claims of a previous owner.³¹ Best of all, according to Baldo, it gave him an undisputed right to the imperial prerogative of plenitude of power: “Plenitude of power in secular affairs belongs exclusively to the emperor or to an independent king in his own kingdom. Lesser rulers [such as Giangaleazzo], though they do not have it by right of ordinary powers, can claim it on the grounds of a special privilege if, for example, a vicariate with plenitude of power has been granted.”³²

to pass statutes; nevertheless if a ruler is present statutes are not valid without his confirmation (Et dico quod licet populi possint facere statuta, tamen si est ibi princeps praesens non valent statuta sine confirmatione principis). Baldo’s statement appears not unconditionally in support of the need for confirmation from above; nevertheless that is how his statement was interpreted: see below note 55.

30 *Consiliorum*, Bk 1, 143 (“Casus talis est”), nr 1: “Ibi non dicitur quod omnis populus possit facere statutum. Sed dicit quod ille populus qui legibus, scilicet propriis, aut moribus regitur, partim sua etc. Illa enim dictio ‘qui’ ponitur restrictive.” Baldo was opposing the claims of a widower to his childless wife’s dowry, which had been based on a local statute that had not been confirmed.

31 The principle was spelt out in the laws “Omnes” and “Bene a Zenone” (C. 7, 37, 2 and 3). See *Consiliorum*, Bk 3, 359 (“Quemadmodum imperator”), nr 2: “A concession granted by the magnificent [Giangaleazzo Visconti] enjoys the same privileges as one given by Caesar so that the laws ‘Omnes’ and ‘Bene a Zenone’, *De quadriennii praescriptione* [C. 7, 37, 2 and 3] apply to our magnificent [signore] just as to Caesar himself (Eadem privilegia habet concessio magnifici quam concessio Caesaris, ita quod l. ‘Omnes’ et l. ‘Bene a Zenone’, *De quadriennii praescriptione* [C. 7, 37, 2 and 3], ita vendicant sibi locum in magifico nostro, sicut in Caesare).”

32 *Consiliorum*, Bk 1, 267 (“Ad evidentiam praemitto”), nrs 8–9: “Habere plenitudinem potestatis in temporalibus competit soli imperatori vel libero regi in regno suo ut ff. *De captivis*, l. ‘Hostes’ [D. 49, 15, 24]. Inferioribus autem non competit iure ordinarie potestatis, sed bene possunt habere ex speciali privilegio, puta si vicariatus est eis collatus cum plenitudine potestatis.” In Baldo’s opinion signori who lacked a vicariate had to rely on long-standing custom: “oportet de talibus privilegiis constare per privilegium principis vel inveteratam consuetudinem.” Bernabò fell into the latter category, once he had been deprived of his vicariate. On Baldo’s interpretation of the Visconti’s plenitude of power, see Black, *Absolutism*, pp. 22–9 and 63–7.

Ducal Monarchy: An Experiment Challenged

Baldo's initiatives had made the most of the vicariate, propelling common law in a sympathetic direction. He was equally helpful when Giangaleazzo became duke, coming up with a constructive interpretation of the authority that came with Wenceslas's two investitures (the first granted in 1395 in respect of Milan, the second in 1396 to cover the remaining cities). With the vicariate, and now with the ducal investiture, Giangaleazzo had explicit possession of imperial powers. But, as Alberico had observed, the Peace of Constance had transferred a range of imperial rights to Visconti cities. Baldo therefore had to address the question whether that agreement also served to limit the powers of the duke himself.³³

Under Baldo's guidance Giangaleazzo was in no hurry to set aside the Peace of Constance: a copy of it was included the first set of statutes to be issued in Milan under the duchy.³⁴ Paradoxically, in his *Short Commentary on the Peace of Constance* Baldo actually sang the praises of that Magna Carta of communal rights. The *Commentary* had been presented to Giangaleazzo in 1393 while negotiations for the ducal investiture were under way.³⁵ According to Baldo, although ostensibly drafted to support the communes, the Peace was actually an acclamation of imperial authority, except that Giangaleazzo was now in the emperor's shoes. "Note that we are all bound to the prince, because just as God is in heaven, so he has appointed the emperor as his vicar and commander in faith, truth, and justice on earth," he wrote.³⁶ Law-making was

33 On Baldo's approach to the Peace of Constance see Jane Black, "Giangaleazzo and the Ducal Title," in *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. John E. Law and Bernadette Paton, (Farnham, Surrey, 2010), pp. 119–130; here pp. 125–30.

34 The statutes, confirmed by Giangaleazzo on 4 January 1396, are published as *Statuta iurisdictionum Mediolani*, ed. Antonio Ceruti in *Historiae patriae monumenta, Leges municipales*, 2, pt 1 (Turin, 1876), cols 981–1074; here col. 1010.

35 See Vincenzo Colli, "L'esemplare di dedica e la tradizione del testo della *Lectura super usibus feudorum* di Baldo degli Ubaldi," *Ius Commune* (see above n. 25), pp. 69–117. For the revival of interest in the Peace of Constance in the second half of the fourteenth century, see Gero Dolezalek, "I commentari di Odofredo e Baldo," pp. 61 and 71; Baldo brought the Peace into the mainstream of texts studied by university students: see Mario Ascheri, "*Quicquid cantet ecclesia*: la pace di Costanza da Odofredo a Baldo degli Ubaldi," in *VI Centenario della morte di Baldo degli Ubaldi 1400–2000* (see above n. 25), pp. 461–71; here p. 464.

36 *Commentariolum super pace Constantiae* (Lyon, 1552), on the words "debitum fidem" f. 118r: "Nota quod omnes tenemur principi, quia ut Deus est princeps in coelis, sic imperator vicarium suum et dominatorem in fide ac veritate et iustitia constituit in terris."

not an innate right of all peoples but one that was conceded from on high, i.e. from the duke: "Let us assume that the prince *has allowed* a city to draft statutes," he wrote.³⁷ Not surprisingly, Baldo accepted that local norms had to be approved: "Local customs which are confirmed in a certain manner and form are not valid except in that form."³⁸ In his hands the Peace of Constance was twisted to favour the ruler. Frederick I had agreed, for example, that "if anyone appeals to us over matters accepted in this treaty as being under communal jurisdiction, we agree not to hear that appeal." Baldo turned this on its head: for him it meant that the emperor would not listen to any challenge to his considered wishes: "A person who takes issue with acts decreed by the emperor from his certain knowledge should not be heeded, but rebuffed; perpetual silence should be imposed on him. For, as this law observes, who is so inflated with pride and arrogance that he may overrule the royal mind?"³⁹ These words were to become a standard source in support of ducal powers.⁴⁰

Baldo's work on feudal law, published at the same time, aimed to iron out other potential restrictions to Visconti authority. Before Giangaleazzo acquired the second ducal title, covering territories outside Milan, Baldo assured him that cities would not be able to rely on the Peace of Constance to retain control over their *contadi*—the clauses in the Peace which protected the communes' jurisdiction over their territories had been revoked. Apparently, while the Peace itself remained in force, the emperor was free to cancel particular aspects of it. That, according to Baldo, was because the original oath taken by Frederick I to uphold the agreed terms had long since expired. As he put it in a celebrated passage: "While the Peace was agreed in perpetuity, the guarantee

37 *Commentariolum super pace Constantiae*, on the word "criminalibus", f. 119v: "Pone quod princeps concessit civitati facere statuta."

38 *Commentariolum super pace Constantiae*, on the word "criminalibus", f. 119v: "Porro si consuetudines confirmatae sunt sub certo modo et forma, non valent nisi sub illo modo et forma."

39 *Commentariolum super pace Constantiae*, on the words "Non admitteremus", f. 120r: "non debet quis audiri contra illud quod facit princeps ex certa scientia, imo debet repelli et imponi ei perpetuum silentium. Nam dicit lex quis tantae superbiae fastidio tumidus est ut regalem sensum regat."

40 See, for example, Giasone del Maino, *Consiliorum sive responsorum* 4 vols. (Venice, 1581), 4, 101 ("Immunitas"), nr 7: "A person should not take issue with acts that the prince decrees or confirms from his certain knowledge. Rather he should be rebuffed and perpetual silence imposed on him, as Baldo so ably puts it in his work *On the Peace of Constance*. (Item non debet quis audiri contra illud quod facit, vel confirmat princeps ex certa scientia, immo debet repelli et imponi ei perpetuum silentium. Ita pulchre notat Baldus in titulum, *De pace Constantiae*.)"

that was given to the Lombard cities was only undertaken for thirty years.”⁴¹ Wenceslas was therefore free to invest Giangaleazzo with these rights: “if the emperor wanted to give me a castello with jurisdiction that belonged to a specific city, he could do so because, unless he has given them to someone else, all jurisdiction and territorial rights belong to the emperor.”⁴² Exploiting their status as imperial feudatories, the Visconti were free to carve out fiefs in local *contadi*, a policy which, in order to strengthen their hold, Giangaleazzo’s successors implemented on a grand scale.⁴³

Baldo’s brother Angelo had observed that contemporary rulers were in the habit of seizing property without proper cause on the basis of their plenitude of power. The Visconti themselves rewarded supporters with property they had confiscated and compromised individual rights in other ways thanks to this authority to overrule the law. Relying on his plenitude of power to retain assets whatever the circumstances, Giangaleazzo had in 1386, for example, peremptorily annulled the claims of anyone who failed to produce proof of ownership of property currently in government hands.⁴⁴ Another service that Baldo rendered to the regime was to strengthen this ability to ignore basic rights: in his view the law allowed such actions even on the flimsiest of excuses. In a consilium composed on the duke’s behalf he wrote that “any reason, even a slight one”, is enough to allow fundamental rights to be overruled by plenitude of power.⁴⁵ As Baldo knew only too well, the Visconti consistently violated

41 See Dolezalek, “I commentari di Odofredo,” pp. 63–6.

42 *In usus feudorum commentaria* (Lyons, 1552), *De natura feudi*, Rubr. nr 3: “licet Pax fuerit perpetuo contracta, tamen obligatio versus civitates Lombardiae non fuit contracta nisi per xxx annos, in textu dictae pacis, in ver. xxx annis; et ideo si imperator vellet mihi concedere aliquod castrum alicuius civitatis cum iurisdictione, posset, quia omnis iurisdiction et omnis districtus apud principem est, nisi prius concessisset alteri.”

43 See Giorgio Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado: secoli XIV e XV* (Turin, 1979), pp. 87–92; Federica Cengarle, *Immagine di potere e prassi di governo: la politica feudale di Filippo Maria Visconti* (Rome, 2006), pp. 87–100; Pierre Savy, “Les feudataires et le contrôle territorial dans le duché de Milan à l’époque des Sforza,” in *Noblesse et États princiers en Italie et en France au XV^e siècle*, ed. Marco Gentile and Pierre Savy, (Rome, 2009), pp. 173–90.

44 *Antiqua ducum Mediolani decreta* pp. 110–11; Alfio Rosario Natale, “Archivi milanesi del Trecento,” *Acme. Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell’Università degli Studi di Milano*, 29 (1976). pp. 263–85; here pp. 277–9.

45 Baldus, *Consiliorum*, Bk 1, 333 (“Ad intelligentiam sequendorum”), nr 1: “If any motive, event a slight one, persuades a prince, he can act from plenitude of power (si aliquod motivum, etiam leve movet principem, de plenitudine potestatis facere potest);” see Black, *Absolutism*, pp. 22–3.

people's rights without demonstrating any obvious justification. He wanted the law to reflect this everyday practice.

Ducal acts stood at the apex of the legal system: local statutes were valid only insofar as they did not contradict Visconti decrees. Giangaleazzo spelt it out: the confirmation of statutes "does not imply that our decrees past or future will be in any respect compromised."⁴⁶ Local law in turn prevailed over common law, as Alberico had testified. The hierarchy reflected Visconti aims of monarchical rule. Giangaleazzo had revealed his objectives in an optimistic programme of legislation and in the pursuit of new titles. It was at that point that Baldo had employed his unrivalled standing to provide the regime with a framework for authority above the law: he had undermined the jurisdiction of cities over their own territory; he had challenged the legislative autonomy of subject communities; and he had supported the duke's plenitude of power. His death in 1400 was followed two years later by that of Giangaleazzo himself. The two had left a striking imprint, but their legacy did not go unchallenged: experience in the fifteenth century was to show that legal tradition and bureaucratic failings were more than a match for Baldo and ducal autocracy.

In the first place, whatever the theory, ducal acts did not always have much force. Practical difficulties limited their effect: even after recovering from the disintegration that took place on Giangaleazzo's death, neither the Visconti nor the Sforza had the administrative resources to enforce their laws.⁴⁷ Ducal decrees were random interventions that were in general poorly drafted; they did not cover any area of law systematically; nor did they take sufficient account of existing requirements.⁴⁸ Francesco Sforza II wrote of his predecessors' acts, "many are worthless, inept or crude; some are extraordinarily cruel, many are incoherent and feeble, and innumerable are redundant in law."⁴⁹ Decrees were apparently regarded as unnecessary impositions which at times of regime-change could be cancelled en bloc: Giangaleazzo had declared Bernabò's

46 This statement appears in Giangaleazzo's confirmation of the statutes of Borgosesia of 1387: *Statuti della Valsesia del sec. XIV*, ed. Carlo Guido Mor (Milan, 1932), p.210; other statutes repeat much the same condition.

47 See Giorgio Chittolini, "L'onore dell'ufficiale," in *Florence and Milan: comparisons and relations*, ed. Craig Hugh Smyth and Gian Carlo Garfagnini, 2 vols (Florence, 1989), 1, pp. 101–33; esp. pp. 109–118.

48 On the deficiencies of ducal legislation see Nadia Covini, "La bilancia dritta." *Pratiche di governo, leggi e ordinamenti nel ducato sforzesco* (Milan, 2007), pp. 126–44.

49 "Cum usu didicerimus multa inutilia, insipida, inconcinnaque esse . . . quaedam nimium saeva, nonnulla mollia et enervata; demum innumera legi supervacua . . ." (ASMi, Uffici Giudiziaria, 168, *Francisci Secundi Ducis Mediolani non nulla pro bona justitiae regimine decreta pro Senatu observanda*, 21 December 1533).

acts invalid;⁵⁰ Filippo Maria abolished all those issued since the collapse of Visconti rule;⁵¹ Francesco Sforza agreed to annul Visconti decrees in many centres as the price of his takeover.⁵² It appears that no adverse consequences in terms of law followed such wholesale cancellations, implying that the initial impact of ducal legislation had been limited. Most ducal acts were individual concessions—pardons, exemptions, property transfers, feudal grants and other privileges, or ad hoc administrative orders. The fact that there were so many dispersed throughout the duchy in public and private collections negated their authority. Galeazzo Maria Sforza understood the problem, attempting to codify the most important measures—though without much success, judging from the complaints of those who undertook the task subsequently.⁵³

Moreover, the duke's acts could be challenged. That was because they were issued against the background of common law. If a gift of property had been made that deprived another person of his rights, if a fief was granted that interfered with another feudal title, if the laws of inheritance had not been honoured, the injured party could go to court, where the case would be argued in the context of wider norms. An act that had prejudiced a defendant's rights, regardless of its origins, would not stand if it had not fulfilled the basic tenets of common law. It could be disallowed if, for example, it had been issued without just cause, or broken a previously agreed contract, or violated the terms of the original investiture in the case of a fief (without the current holder having been convicted of a serious crime). Common law was not static, but evolved in accordance with changing legal opinion. Where Baldo supported the duke's ability to overrule individual rights, other professors in Pavia believed a ruler's duty was to respect the law, declaring particular ducal concessions invalid. Cristoforo Castiglioni (1345–1425), Raffaele Fulgosio (1367–1427), and Francesco Corte (d. 1495), all preeminent lawyers, were convinced that there had to be solid and verifiable cause before individual rights could

50 ASMi, Reg. Duc. 212, p.116.

51 The decree of 3 March 1413 is published in Luigi Osio, *Documenti diplomatici tratti dagli archivj Milanesi*, 3 vols. (Milan 1864–72), 2, pp. 15–16.

52 See, for example, Pavia's agreement in Giuseppe Robolini, *Notizie appartenenti alla storia della sua patria*, 6 vols. (Pavia, 1838), 6, pt 1 p. 308; for Vigevano see Alessandro Colombo, "Vigevano e la Repubblica Ambrosiana nella lotta contro Francesco Sforza (agosto 1447–giugno 1449)," *Bollettino della Società Pavese della Storia Patria*, 2 (1902 and 1903), pp. 315–77; 3, pp. 3–38 and 449–515; here 3, p. 35.

53 On the dispersal of decrees see Leverotti, "Leggi del principe"; Francesco Grassi, largely responsible for collecting the decrees for the new code of 1541 complained of the "many thousands of decrees scattered (*multa millia decretorum sparsa*)" through the duchy (*Constitutiones domini Mediolanensis* (Milan, 1574), Dedication).

be disregarded.⁵⁴ Similarly, Baldo's teaching that local statutes were not valid without the duke's approval was rejected. Giasone del Maino, who lectured in Pavia and who was close to the Sforza, disagreed profoundly with Baldo: "Since all peoples have the capacity to pass laws, I hold that no other confirmation by a superior authority is legally required, even though Baldo quite wrongly believed otherwise."⁵⁵ As the statutes of Como of 1458 stated, "Decrees that are incompatible with statutes are not followed."⁵⁶

The dukes themselves agreed that individual concessions ought not to undermine the rights of third parties. In what became one of his best-known decrees, "Providere volentes," (6 October 1423), Filippo Maria declared that "it has never been our intention to trespass on the rights of third parties," ordering that "in grants, remissions, pardons or concessions of any kind, present or future, no rights belonging to any other person are to be infringed."⁵⁷ The duke did append a let-out clause for cases where such acts constituted deliberate policy. But in most instances he believed that concessions had in all likelihood been awarded at the behest of petitioners, who could not be trusted to have revealed the full facts. The duke showed his disquiet in a decree annulling all acts issued on behalf of private creditors "conceded as a result of campaigning by petitioners that undermined the rights of third parties, contrary to his own principles and in defiance of common law, ducal decrees, and communal statutes."⁵⁸ With regard to the hierarchy of systems it is worth noting that in

54 For instances where ducal acts were challenged in court, see Black, *Absolutism*, pp. 149–81; on these three figures see pp. 150–3; 155–7; 160 respectively.

55 *In primam Digesti Veteris partem commentaria*, ad 1. "Omnes populi," *De iustitia et iure*, [D. 1, 9, 1] Repetitio, nr 35 (Venice, 1598), f. 16^r: "cum quilibet populus habeat facultatem faciendi statuta, teneo quod de iure non requiritur alia confirmatio superioris, quamvis aliter et male teneat Baldus." That was certainly true, he explained (nr 7, f. 14^v): "where such a statute did not either harm the ruler's or his superior's interests, undermine the prerogatives reserved to him as a sign of his supremacy, or threaten moral standards (dummodo non tendant contra principem aut suum superiorem et nisi disponant super his quae sunt reservata principi in signum supremæ potestatis, vel sint contra bonos mores)".

56 *Statuta civitatis et episcopatus Cumarum* (1458), ed. Marta Luigina Mangini (Varese, 2008), p. 300, cap. 336: "Decreta repugnantia statutis non servantur."

57 *Antiqua ducum Mediolani decreta*, p. 258: "Quia non fuit, nec est, intentio nostra ius alicui quaesitum tollere, declaramus et decernimus quod per aliquas donationes, remissiones, absolutiones aut alias quasvis concessionones tam factas quam fiendas non intelligatur ius alicui quaesitum sublatum esse."

58 *Antiqua ducum Mediolani decreta*, p. 300: "Omnes letteras... contra debitores privatos... aut in favorem debitorum... tamquam emanatas ad importunitatem petentium et contra rectam mentem dispositionemque nostram ac etiam contra dispositionem

this list *ius commune* is ranked alongside, and in fact ahead of, ducal decrees and local legislation as the fundamental basis of law in the duchy not to be infringed on an individual's behalf. Common law had to be respected because no collection of either decrees or statutes could hope to cover the infinite variety of circumstances that that law could address. Whether issued by civic authorities or by the duke himself, local laws were only ever a limited exception to the principles of common law, which offered agreed guidance in an infinite variety of circumstances.⁵⁹

The joint efforts of Baldo and Giangaleazzo to establish the Visconti as supreme legislators had been undermined by professional dissent, by the failings of central government, and by a tradition of local statutes that was backed by the weight of common law.

Spanish Milan: The "Impenetrable Labyrinth"

Francesco II, the last Sforza duke, was able to win his lands from the king of France only with help from Charles V's armies; the imperial triumph at Pavia in 1525, which saw the expulsion of the French, was itself followed by conflict between the duke and his former protector, so that it was 1529 before Francesco was firmly in control.⁶⁰ By 1535 he was dead, leaving Charles again in charge. It was a short time to make a mark; and yet Francesco left a significant legacy: he relinquished to the Senate the personal plenitude of power that had been so eagerly sought by the Visconti.⁶¹ More famously, he ensured that the hundreds of decrees devised by his predecessors, scattered here and there in local compilations and communal archives—incoherent, contradictory and ill-conceived as so many of them were—would be codified. That masterly collection, published as the *Constitutiones domini mediolanensis* under Charles v's auspices

iuris communis, necnon decretorum, statutorum et ordinamentorum tam nostrorum quam communitatum nostrarum et in praeiudicium iurium tertii, cassamus, revocamus, irritamus."

59 Aldo Mazzacane discusses the role of *ius commune* in "Law and Jurists in the Formation of the Modern State in Italy," *The Journal of Modern History*, 67 (1995), Supplement, *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300–1600*, pp. S62–73; here pp. S66–8.

60 On this period see Stefano D'Amico, *Spanish Milan. A City within the Empire, 1535–1706* (New York, 2012); Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvarino, "The State of Milan and the Spanish Monarchy," in *Spain in Italy: Politics Society, and Religion 1500–1700*, ed. Thomas James Dandeleit and John A. Marino, pp. 99–132; Domenico Sella, *Il ducato di Milano dal 1535 al 1796*, vol. 11 of the *Storia d'Italia*, directed by G. Galasso (Turin, 1984).

61 Black, *Absolutism*, pp. 189–93.

in 1541, survived at the core of government and the administration of justice until the Napoleonic reforms. The collection contains brief sections on inheritance and on criminal justice but the work covers mainly public law—the organs of government, taxation, the judicial system, fiefs, and legitimizations.⁶² The inconsistencies that had characterized Visconti and Sforza decrees were resolved, with the vast bulk of their ordinances being abandoned. Anxious to rid the regime of its reputation for tyranny, the compilers abolished some of the more notorious prerogatives that had been sanctioned by Baldo: a prime example were the laws that disadvantaged property owners in favour of government.⁶³ Moreover, the practice whereby decrees had to be published locally before coming into force was at an end: the new code applied everywhere.

But it would be wrong to exaggerate the New Constitutions' impact on the legal landscape. As in the days of Azzone and Luchino, statutes continued to form the nuts and bolts of the law. The new code was issued with the requirement that "all local statutes at variance with its laws will not apply."⁶⁴ That meant, conversely, that where the Constitutions were silent (i.e. in most facets of law), local statutes prevailed: wills, contracts, and marriage settlements were among the vast areas of activity not comprehensively covered. Statutes were testimony to the continued survival of local autonomy. Writing in the 1660s, the celebrated jurist Giovambattista De Luca (1614–1683) gave an historical explanation for the central role of local statutes: if, before submitting to a signore, a city had been a free republic with its own laws, the new ruler would have had an obligation to accept its statutes.⁶⁵ With local law continuing to take precedence there was little uniformity in the Milanese state.

62 For an analysis of the new code see Maria Gigliola Di Renzo Villata, "Sulle tracce di un diritto 'patrio' nel Ducato di Milano a metà Cinquecento: tra Novae Constitutiones (1541) e... fonti del diritto antiche e recenti," in *Studia Borromaica, Prima di Carlo Borromeo. Istituzioni, religione e società a Milano agli inizi del '500* (Rome, 2012), pp. 121–56.

63 These were the laws "Omnes" and "Bene a Zenone" (C. 7, 37, 2 and 3) referred to above; see Black, *Absolutism*, pp. 187–8.

64 *Constitutiones domini mediolanensis*, Charles v's *Proemium*.

65 *Theatrum veritatis et iustitiae*, 18 vols. (Cologne, 1690–3), vol. 2, *Discursus* 35, pp. 240–1, nr 23: "That is because in my judgement, when it comes to the interpretation of the statutes of those Italian cities which are now subjects and incorporated into, or restored to, a principality, as are many cities especially in Lombardy, the new ruler did not abolish existing laws but instead confirmed and continued to accept them (Quare pro meo iudicio, quando agitur de interpretaatione statutorum aliquarum civitatum Italiae, quae nunc subditae sint et alicui principatui incorporatae vel restitutae, ut praesertim sunt multae civitates Lombardiae... nouus Dominus proprias leges iam ordinatas non abrogauerit, sed eas potius approbauerit atque continuare passus sit, ac patiatur)". On the hierarchy

Even more problematic than statutes were local customs, which, if well enough established, were equally valid, and capable of overriding central government decrees.⁶⁶ A bad custom can excuse someone from civil sanctions, even in a case of homicide, wrote the Novarese lawyer Giovanni Battista Piotto (1518–70).⁶⁷ Such deference to local tradition came at a price: commerce was handicapped, property transactions were uncertain, marriage agreements were fraught with pitfalls. Life under a multiplicity of laws led to the disproportionate number of “furious lawsuits and bitter disputes,” described in the following century by the historian and jurist Gabriele Verri (1695–1782).⁶⁸ The system provided “a happy hunting ground for an untutored but canny class of lawyers” who had every incentive to preserve the quagmire.⁶⁹ For all its powers the government was not, it seems, in a position to undertake effective reform.

Enshrined in the New Constitutions was the Senate, which now came into its own at the centre of government alongside the Spanish governor. Its structure, rooted in the Sforza councils (the Consiglio Segreto and Consiglio di Giustizia), had been formalized by Louis XII in the Edict of Vigevano of 1499. The Senate enjoyed powers stemming from ducal prerogatives—

of law in the state of Milan according to De Luca and other contemporary jurists, see Gigliola di Renzo Villata, “Diritto comune e diritto locale nella cultura giuridica Lombarda dell'età moderna,” in *Diritto comune e diritti locali nella storia dell'Europa* (Milan, 1980), pp. 331–88.

66 That was the opinion of the leading sixteenth-century Lombard jurist, Giulio Claro (1525–75): see Gian Paolo Massetto, “La prassi giuridica lombarda nell'opera di Giulio Claro (1525–1575),” in idem, *Saggi di storia del diritto penale lombardo (Secc. XVI–XVIII)* (Milan, 1994), pp. 12–59; here p. 49; on customary law in Lombardy in general *ibid.* pp. 37–39, 44–51. For the status of custom in this period generally see Roy Garré, “The Dynamics of Law Formation in Italian Legal Science during the Early Modern Period: the Function of Custom,” in *Empowering Interactions. Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300–1900*, ed. Wim Blockmans, André Holenstein, and Jon Mathieu (Farnham, Surrey, 2009), pp. 91–7.

67 In *Tractatus singularis de in litem iurando* (Osnabrück, 1676), Cap. 6, nr 57 p. 136 Piotto gave an example: “The general principle is that a custom, even a bad or useless one, excuses criminal acts. For example if a there is a custom of playing with stones and someone happens to be killed with a stone, there are no grounds for punishment for homicide (Et est generale quod consuetudo, etiam mala et nulla, excusat in delictis, puta si sit consuetudo ludendi ad lapides, et aliquis casu occidatur cum lapide; nam tunc non erit locus poenae homicidii).”

68 *De ortu et progressu juris mediolanensis prodromus*, in *Constitutiones domini Mediolani* (Milan, 1747), pp. XXI–CXL; here p. CIX: “clamorosi fori iurgia excitantes.”

69 Adriano Cavanna, “Tramonto e fine degli statuti lombardi,” in *Diritto comune e diritti locali nella storia dell'Europa*, pp. 307–28; here pp. 315–6.

dispensations, exemptions, reinstatements of status, and similar privileges.⁷⁰ Most striking was its authority to confirm or reject the king's decrees,⁷¹ and to verify (*interinare*) his concessions and privileges (a process imported from French parlements).⁷² In order to retain the goodwill of the local elite, tensions between the Senate and the governor were resolved by Charles v in favour of the former in the Edict of Worms issued in 1545.⁷³

Francesco II had added to the Senate's judicial authority: it was to "preside over and supervise all aspects of justice and equity," a provision incorporated into the New Constitutions. Equity was interpreted as the right to judge according to conscience rather than law: the Senate had been handed arbitrary power.⁷⁴ In hearing petitions, issuing *rescritti* (which took litigation away from inferior courts), granting dispensations and exemptions, it acted on behalf of

70 Léon Gabriel Pélissier, *Documents pour l'histoire de la domination Française dans le Milanais (1499–1513)* (Toulouse, 1891), pp. 22–5. On the powers of the Senate and the status of its decisions see Annamaria Monti, "Between case law and legislation: the Senato of Milan, a supreme court during the Ancien Régime," in *Ad Fontes: Europäisches Forum Junger Rechtshistorikerinnen Wien 2001*, ed. Birgit Feldner, Verena T. Halbwachs, and Thomas Olechowski (Frankfurt, 2002), pp. 303–18; for more detailed analysis of its decisions see eadem, "Iudicare tamquam deus". *I modi della giustizia senatoria nel ducato di Milano tra cinque e settecento* (Milan, 2003), pp. 147–229.

71 "We give and concede to the senate by this [act] the power and authority to confirm or moderate our ducal decrees (Eidem senatui nostro damus et concedimus, per praesentes, potestatem seu auctoritatem decreta nostra ducalia confirmandi et infirmandi)." (Pélissier *Documents*, pp. 22–3).

72 "And in addition the senate has responsibility for the verification and interination of the grants, remissions, pardons, privileges, ordinances and edicts that we make in matters of both justice and government (Et cognoscet ulterius dictus senatus de verificatione et interinatione litterarum nostrarum donorum, remissionum, indulgentiarum, privilegiorum, ordinationum, et edictorum tam justitiam quam policiam concernentium)." (Pélissier, *Documents*, p. 23).

73 Ugo Petronio, *Il Senato di Milano. Istituzioni giuridiche ed esercizio del potere nel ducato di Milano da Carlo V a Giuseppe II* (Milan, 1972), pp. 77–87. On turf wars between the governor and the Senate see Gian Paolo Massetto, "Monarchia spagnola, Senato e Governatore: la questione delle grazie nel ducato di Milano. Secoli XVI–XVII," *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, s. II, 7 (1990), pp. 75–112; here 79–86.

74 *Constitutiones domini Mediolani*, Bk 1, *De senatoribus*: "And let the senate have the authority to confirm, reject or abolish the prince's decrees and to grant all forms of dispensation, even where statutes and constitutions are contravened... And in addition to the above [let it have the right] to preside over and supervise all aspects of justice and equity (Habeatque idem Senatus auctoritatem constitutiones Principis confirmandi, infirmandi, et tollendi, ac concedendi quascunque dispensationes, etiam contra statuta et constitutiones... Et ultra praemissa, in his quae ad iusticiam aut aequitatem spectant providendi)".

the Spanish king. It was a court of first instance in important cases, such as those concerning fiefs or involving substantial sums, and it was an appeal court for lesser disputes; its own decisions were final, not even the king being allowed to intervene. Moreover, with its powers of equity the Senate did not have to conform to existing measures, nor give reasons for its judgements. The Senate was not ostensibly a legislative body, but it came to have a large input into the law: its decisions became a permanent feature, appearing alongside the code itself as a new source of legislation.⁷⁵

While not as dominant as Florence was in Tuscany, Milan was by far the largest city in Sforza territories. Under the Senate the centre of gravity in Lombardy shifted further towards the metropolis. With an absentee monarch and the Senate taking over much of the role of the former dukes, wide powers had been handed to the local elite, and in particular to Milan's dominant families:⁷⁶ members of the Senate came from the patriciate, or urban nobility, with Milan taking the lion's share.⁷⁷ Positions on the Senate were for life, new members being co-opted by those already serving. The favouritism of its fourteen members reinforced the dominance of the patriciate: in fulfilling their role of hearing appeals, settling cases and granting privileges its members indulged family and friends. Their venality soon became notorious. Typical was the experience of one unfortunate businessman when he attempted in 1560 to sue a local governor for the return of confiscated merchandise: even after paying out 300 gold scudi to bribe a senator, his case was ignored because it involved a patrician.⁷⁸ A wide-ranging inspection, lasting from 1559 to 1562,

75 The version of the *Constitutiones* edited by P.A. Mogno Fossato as *Constitutiones mediolanensis dominii* (Milan, 1764) includes a large collection of decisions dating back to the 1540s, arranged under the relevant act.

76 D'Amico, *Spanish Milan* (see above n. 70), pp. 132–3; Sella, *Il ducato di Milano* (see above n. 70), pp. 24–7; for the patriciate in the later period see Giulio Vismara, "Le istituzioni del patriziato," in *Il declino spagnolo* vol. 11 of the *Storia di Milano*, Fondazione Treccani degli Alfieri (Milan, 1958), pp. 225–82.

77 Of the 208 senators who held seats from 1561–1706 forty per cent were Milanese, with fewer than ten per cent coming from any of the other cities: see Ugo Petronio, "Burocrazia e burocrati nel ducato di Milano dal 1561 al 1706," in *Per Francesco Calasso. Studi degli allievi* (Rome, 1978), pp. 479–552; here pp. 486–90. On the increasingly stringent qualification for the patriciate, see Giulio Vismara, "Il patriziato milanese nel Cinque-Seicento," in Elena Fasano Guarini, ed., *Potere e società negli stati regionali italiani fra '500 e '600* (Bologna, 1978), pp. 153–71.

78 Federico Chabod, "Usi e abusi nell'amministrazione dello stato di Milano a mezzo il '500," in *Studi storici in onore di Gioacchino Volpe per il suo 80° compleanno*, 2 vols. (Bologna, 1958), 1, pp. 93–194; here p. 160. On corruption in the Senate in relation to its arbitrary

was undertaken on Philip II's orders, but a culture of silence thwarted attempts at reform.⁷⁹ Twenty years later, in his *Ordini di Tomar* of 17 April 1581, Philip II warned the senators, "You make such extravagant use of your arbitrary powers in civil and criminal cases that you pardon and condemn without regard to laws, statutes or the Constitutions."⁸⁰ But there was little he could do to rid the Senate of abuses.

As with the dukes, whose powers it had inherited, the Senate did not have effective control over the law. It was impossible to know which ruling took precedence or even what was in force. Laws emanating from central government (governor's decrees, the New Constitutions, and decisions of the Senate) in theory prevailed over local statutes, both of those in turn trumping *ius commune*. At the same time special status was reserved for local statutes and customs, since for all its absolute powers, central government been unable, or perhaps unwilling, to suppress age-old rights enshrined in the principle that people are allowed to live by their own laws. Such was the achievement of the Spanish period. Change would never take place under the existing constitution because it had been in the interests of the Senate and the old guard to maintain the system.⁸¹ The calamitous state of the law was also due to the vested interests of the localities whose customs and statutes were legally enforceable. In order to bring some coherence and rationality to the morass, lawyers continued to turn to *ius commune*: not only statutes but also the New Constitutions should be interpreted so as to comply with common law: "the Constitutions of Milan are presumed to aim at conformity with *ius commune*, contradicting that law as minimally as possible" wrote the commentator Angelo Stefano Garoni.⁸² As a result experts in common law who had been venerated since the days of the Visconti—Alberico, Baldo, Giasone del Maino and the rest—retained their authority in the Spanish period: the edition of the New Constitutions

powers see Monti, *Iudicare tamquam deus*, pp. 100–115 and eadem, "Représentation et réalité de la justice: l'état de Milan aux XVI^e et XVII^e Siècles," in *Réalités et Représentations de la justice*, ed. V. Lemonnier-Lesage, M.-N. Fouligny and M.R. Miranda (Nancy, 2012), pp. 153–171; here pp. 162–7.

79 Chabod, "Usi e abusi," pp. 155–177.

80 "Si usa da voi tanto assolutamente l'arbitrio nelle sentenze e civili, e criminali, che assolve, e condannate senza guardare leggi, statuti, nè costituzioni dello Stato." (quoted in Petronio, *Il Senato di Milano*, p. 142).

81 A. Cavanna, "Tramonto e fine degli statuti lombardi" (see above n. 78), pp. 320–22.

82 Garoni left a post as professor at Pavia in 1618 to practice in Milan: see Di Renzo Villata, "Diritto comune e diritto locale," pp. 359 and 365, n. 105.

of 1764 by Mogno Fossato contains hundreds of references to their works.⁸³ “An impenetrable labyrinth of statutes and laws in which the wealth of her majesty’s subjects is lost” was how the legal system was described in 1765 by Maria Theresa’s chancellor of state, Wenceslas Kaunitz.⁸⁴ Effective reform, Kaunitz believed, would mean abolishing the current fabric entirely.

Through their control of local statutes the Visconti had set their sights on becoming supreme legislators in their territories. They had hoped to see their role validated by imperial vicariates and the ducal title, Giangaleazzo recruiting Baldo, the greatest commentator of them all, to resolve fundamental issues in his favour. Baldo had wanted to provide the area with a more centralized scheme, but for all his eminence and expertise, opinion remained on the side of local rights. In the long run, rule via communal statutes, had not empowered central government but had had the reverse effect—enhancing local law, it resulted ultimately to the chaotic system that prevailed under Spanish rule.

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83 On the supremacy of common law in the area see Maria Gigliola Di Renzo Villata, “Tra *ius nostrum* e *ius comune*. Il diritto patrio nel Ducato di Milano,” in *Il diritto patrio tra diritto comune e codificazione (secoli XVI–XIX)* (Rome, 2006), pp. 217–254; here p. 253.

84 Kaunitz’s letter of 29 December 1765 to Maria Theresa’s minister Carlo di Firmian, is published in Petronio, *Il Senato*, p. 296.

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Towards a New Social Category: The Military

Alessandra Dattero

Introduction

During the early modern period, the territory of Lombardy was of central importance in the military dynamics involving the entire Italian peninsula and its relationship with the European states. Because of its geographical position, Lombardy was an important crossroads for commercial transit with a remarkable network of roads, also used by the armies. The Lombard military organization had assumed a prominent position in Italy since the era of the communes.

In the course of the three centuries that I shall be considering, military organization in Europe underwent profound transformations defined by some historians as a “military revolution”. This process was characterized by growth in the size of armies and by the adoption of important technical and tactical innovations which have been discussed elsewhere.¹ But a constant that could be defined as anthropological clearly emerges: the mingling of the military world with other social spheres. In current Western culture the military is confined to a circumscribed area. Our society in general is primarily civilian. War during the early modern period involved the whole of society, and the military world was not distinct from civil society. This long-standing intertwining influenced all levels of political organization, social stratification, finance, economy, culture and daily life. Some historians have described the military organization as a “mirror” of the society of that time. It was an essential and immanent element that reflected political structures, social hierarchies, economic development and scientific knowledge. At the same time, because of the pervasive and everyday presence of war, it impacted on all the other components

1 It would not be opportune to compare here the origin and evolution of this historiographical category; for a synthesis, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution. Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800*, Cambridge, 1988, and Jeremy Black, ed., *European warfare 1453–1815* (New York 1999). For Italy, see Claudio Donati, “Militärstrukturen der italienischen Staaten in den Frühen Neuzeit: ein Forschungsbericht jüngster Studien” in *Militär und Gesellschaft in der frühen Neuzeit*, n. 7 (2003) Heft 2, pp. 145–167; Luciano Pezzolo, “La ‘rivoluzione militare’: una prospettiva italiana 1400–1700”, in Alessandra Dattero – Stefano Levati, eds., *Militari in età moderna. La centralità di un tema di confine* (Milan 2006), pp. 15–59.

of society.² It has also been observed that, up until the Renaissance, there was no clear affirmation of the exclusive power of the Prince, compared to the nobility, to make war.³

For these reasons, although during these centuries there was an increasing professionalization of the military, we cannot consider the army as external to society, regulated by its own norms, a world to itself, in which developments were exclusively linked to technological, logistic and tactical innovations. In the past, this idea dominated military history, deriving from a perspective unthinkingly taken from the present, which does not satisfy either the need to understand the societies of the past, nor the study of the military phenomenon itself in its historical dimension. Between the Middle Ages and the modern era, social rank regulated relationships between people, and the development of specialized knowledge, careers and abilities was circumscribed by this social stratification. All these aspects emerged clearly in Lombardy, which was heavily involved in military conflicts, as much as, if not more than the other European states. It was mostly in the late eighteenth century that became evident, quite gradually and inconsistently, forms of differentiation and separation of the military from the rest of society in the education, careers, laws, lodgings and welfare institutions.

The Duchy of Milan and Military Organization in the Later Middle Ages

During the fourteenth century, the Italian peninsula saw an increase in conflicts linked to ambition to expand cities and the *signori* who sought to extend their hegemony and establish widespread regional dominions. Such was the case of the Visconti, whose dominion reached its maximum extension under

2 Angelantonio Spagnoletti, "Onore e spirito nazionale nei soldati italiani al servizio della monarchia spagnola", in Claudio Donati – Bernhard Kroener, eds., *Militari e società civile nell'Europa dell'età moderna (secoli XVI–XVIII)*, Atti della 47 settimana di studi, Trento, 13–17 settembre 2004 (Bologna 2007), pp. 211–253; Giorgio Chittolini, "Il 'militare' tra tardo medio-evo e prima età moderna", in *ibid.*, pp. 53–102.

3 Giorgio Chittolini, "Guerre, guerricchie e riasseti territoriali in una provincia lombarda di confine: Parma e il parmense, agosto 1447–febbraio 1449", in *Società e Storia*, 108 (2005), pp. 221–249; Andrea Gamberini, "Un linguaggio cetuale: le parole della guerra nel Ducato di Milano", in Andrea Gamberini – Giuseppe Petralia, eds., *Linguaggi politici nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome 2007), pp. 445–467; Diego Quaglioni, "La disciplina delle armi tra teologia e diritto. I trattatisti dello «ius militare»", in Claudio Donati – Bernhard Kroener, eds., *Militari e società civile*, pp. 447–462.

Gian Galeazzo (1385–1402).⁴ His aggressive policy was founded on an efficient war machine, supported by a flourishing economy and the capacity of the Visconti to utilize it for their own ends, compared to the more general conditions of military practice in their time. Thanks to greater financial resources in the Italian peninsula during the fourteenth century, there was more recourse to new military forces compared to the traditional militia of the *cives*, which had been characteristic of the military organization of the communes.⁵ Large freelance companies had become established, stable formations of mercenaries, many of them from beyond the Alps, who put themselves at the service of a *signore*. The largest counted up to 3,000 horsemen, who with all their train could amount to 30,000 persons. The companies also used their military strength to extort money from and sack cities and territories, but from the late fourteenth century, the emergence of more complex political structures made the limitations of this form of military anarchy evident.⁶ From 1380, there was a tendency to stabilize the mercenary companies, prolonging the term of service from three months to six and then to one or more years, a process that marked the passage to the system of *condotte*. *Condotte* provided for stable contracts with employers and mostly concerned *condottieri* who were part of the Italian political scene, princes of small states or fiefholders, who thus had stronger links to the state to which they gave their military services. The clause of “*beneplacito*” bound the *condottieri* at the end of the contract not to conclude new agreements for six months or a year without the authorization of the employer. Finally, *condotte di pace* were stipulated, which retained the combatants even

4 F. Cognasso, “L’unificazione della Lombardia sotto Milano”, in *Storia di Milano. V. La signoria dei Visconti (1310–1392)* (Rome 1955), pp. 3–567; Giorgio Chittolini, “La signoria dei Visconti e degli Sforza”, in Livio Antonielli – Giorgio Chittolini, eds., *Storia della Lombardia. I. Dalle origini al Seicento* (Rome 2001), pp. 156–176.

5 Contractual employment of professional soldiers almost completely replaced compulsory recruitment and the army of the people, which maintained an ever more residual role, of a non-specialized body limited to defending the territory (Philippe Contamine, *La Guerra nel Medioevo* trans. Tukei Capra (Bologna 1986); Michael E. Mallett, *Signori e mercenari. La guerra nell’Italia del Rinascimento* trans. Princivale Alghisi (Bologna 1983); Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur, *Cavalieri e cittadini. Guerra, conflitti e società nell’Italia comunale* trans. Aldo Pasquali (Bologna 2003); Paolo Grillo, “12.000 uomini, di cui 6.000 con lance lunghe e 3.000 con pancere e mannaie». L’esercito milanese agli inizi del Trecento”, *Società e Storia*, 116 (2007), pp. 233–253.

6 Paolo Grillo, *Cavalieri e popoli in armi. Le istituzioni militari nell’Italia medievale* (Rome 2008), pp. 148–170.

at the end of hostilities in reduced numbers at a limited cost, with the obligation to reconstitute their units if a conflict broke out.⁷

The military organization instituted by the Visconti was a significant example of this evolution. They hired some of the major freelance companies, such as the White Company of Sir John Hawkwood or that of the Count of Landau. These, however, were employed above all in offensive expeditions outside the dominion, and not in areas nearby. Within Lombardy, on the other hand, the Visconti manifested early on their wish to exercise greater control over the military commanders, creating a stable relationship of collaboration and fidelity. They sought to bring about greater integration of the military forces in the duchy. Let us consider Jacopo Dal Verme, the *condottiero* who had an important military role until Gian Galeazzo asserted his control at the expense of his uncle Bernabò in 1385. He stayed in the service of Gian Galeazzo, who appointed him councillor and captain-general of the Visconti army. It was he who conquered Padua and defended Milan against Sir John Hawkwood and Jean d'Armagnac. At the head of an army of 2,000 lances and 4,000 infantry, he brought cities that rebelled after the unexpected death of the duke to submission and contributed to the fight against the Ghibellines and the defeat of Facino Cane. Jacopo Dal Verme remained in the service of the Visconti, although after the death of Gian Galeazzo he lost command of the army, which was entrusted by Giovanni Maria to Carlo Malatesta.⁸

Apart from turning to major *condottieri*, the Visconti took care to engage small mercenary formations, so as to retain soldiers more directly answerable to them directly than were those serving under the major *condotte*. Consequently, from the time of Bernabò, they sought to encourage the enrolment of individual lances. The lance was the basic cavalry unit. Initially, it was made up of a heavily-armed horseman, another horseman armed with a breastplate, helmet, cuisses, sword and dagger and a squire. Subsequently this unit counted five or six men, among them were mounted archers and other combatants. Lances were organized in *conestabilarie*, which in Milan were also called *bandiere*, that is, companies or squadrons led by a constable, who was responsible for it under a contract of *condotta*. The term constable was generic and could indicate the head of hundreds of men-at-arms, or of a small squadron. Groups of *bandiere* were commanded by *collaterali*, usually members of the nobility of

7 For the system of *condotte* see Mario Del Treppo, "Gli aspetti organizzativi economici e sociali di una compagnia di ventura italiana", *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 85 (1973), pp. 253–275; Michael E. Mallett, *Signori e mercenari*.

8 Michael E. Mallett, "Jacopo dal Verme" in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, (Rome 1986), vol. 32, pp. 262–267.

the city and the territory, who answered directly to the Duke.⁹ The organization of the cadre of commanders, therefore, tended to increase ducal control. In 1390, Milanese ducal finances were burdened with 1,203 lances, organized in 201 *bandiere*, which amounted to 4,458 *paghe* in all, plus several hundred troops paid by the Duke based in the castles and city garrisons, at a monthly cost of 42,000 gold florins. Among the constables, the same names, linked to the Visconti, appear repeatedly.¹⁰ The *condotte*, therefore, assumed the appearance of an army in the service of the Prince for long periods. This meant the forces were stable, and under the control of the Duke. To complete their integration, a policy of feudal grants in favour of the *condottieri* was put into effect, from which the Duke derived indisputable advantages: financial advantages, as the enfeoffment substituted in part for the payment in money for services rendered; but above all the bonds between the *condottieri* and their forces with the Duke were strengthened, since the cavalry were recruited from the fiefs and could be recompensed with offices and property. The relationship of trust with the *condottieri* thus also became a guarantee and corroboration of the Duke's territorial control. Consequently, a symbiotic relationship between the Duke and *condottieri* came into being: both parties, for example, were interested in defending the territory from enemies.

In addition to this effort to integrate the *condottieri*, there was also a precocious recruitment of forces directly dependent on the Duke: the household troops, the *lance spezzate* and the ducal-retained infantry. The household troops were originally the ducal guard, to whom they were bound by a relationship of familiarity and proximity, on par with other trusted servants who had administrative and diplomatic duties. This relationship was formalized by a letter sanctioning their privileges of exemption from taxes and freedom of movement within the duchy. This body was formed in 1369 by Bernabò Visconti, who had called the richest nobles of the Lombard cities to arms. In the time of Filippo Maria, there were 700 men-at-arms with their following, equivalent to 2,000 horse and 3,000 men, and they were the Duke's most trusted soldiers, placed at the head of the army. Later, under the Sforza, the household troops were given

9 Among them were members of the Visconti family (Marco, Lodrisio and Luchino, during the *signoria* of Azzone; then Giovanni Visconti d'Oleggio and Bernabò); among the Milanese nobles were Pinalla Aliprandi, Andreotto da Marliano and Sozio da Bisozzero (Patrizia Mainoni, *Guerra e finanza privata a metà Trecento*, in *Eadem, Economia e politica nella Lombardia medievale. Da Bergamo a Milano fra XIII e XV secolo* (Biella 1994), pp. 129–157).

10 Ibid.

the uniforms and horses of a man-at-arms.¹¹ The *lance spezzate* incorporated men-at-arms enrolled individually, or small companies left without the leadership of a *condottiero*. There was a notable effort by the Dukes to promote the integration of these units: they received better pay than the men of the *condotte* and often obtained revenues, benefits, gifts or privileges of citizenship, and were encouraged to marry into noble families of the duchy. Finally, there was the corps of ducal-retained infantry. This infantry corps received a regular wage, the *provisione*, and was principally employed in duties as garrisons and guards. The *provisionati* wore a distinctive uniform with a jacket, hood and cloak of red cloth and metallic bands, which marked their membership in the ducal militia.¹²

In the duchy, as in other European states, from the late fourteenth century there were the beginnings of a permanent army, formed by forces garrisoning castles and cities, the prince's guard and the *lanze spezzate*. Stabilizing the military forces brought with it the need to provide for their maintenance and billets; hence the development of a better-structured military administration, which could also be considered a sign of the solidity of the Visconti dominion. In 1348, a *Banco degli stipendiati* was founded to pay the troops. It was based in Milan and had branches in the other subject cities. The cavalrymen listed on the rolls of the *Banco degli stipendiati* received the *prestanza*, that is an advance on their future salary. This was the only assured income, and with this the company was to be armed and equipped. Successive payments were not regular, and often the soldiers had to obtain loans from bankers, guaranteeing them against their future pay. The other issue raised by the maintenance of stable ducal forces was the need to provide regular billets for a growing number of soldiers with their horses, which was resolved by practice of lodging them within the communities at the expense of the civilian population. In 1357 Galeazzo issued a list of tariffs that distributed the requisitions and the military burdens within his dominion, forbidding plunder. Towards the end of the century, the quantities of straw, household goods, victuals and wood that the communities had to furnish were fixed. From 1430, billets were supervised locally by a "*famigliare*" of the Duke, resulting in 1442 in the office of commissioner of billets, who had representatives in every city. The following year, with the drawing-up of a new *estimo*, the *tassa dei cavalli* was fixed, a general

11 Maria Nadia Covini, "Per la storia delle milizie viscontee: i famigliari armigeri di Filippo Maria Visconti", in L. Chiappa Mauri, L. De Angelis Cappabianca, Patrizia Mainoni, eds., *L'età dei Visconti. Il dominio di Milano fra XIII e XV secolo* (Milan 1993), pp. 35–63.

12 Maria Nadia Covini, *L'esercito del duca. Organizzazione militare e istituzioni al tempo degli Sforza (1450–1480)* (Rome 1998), pp. 3–59.

allotment of billets, calculated at 12,500 horses in all. Such an allotment offered the coefficients for the distribution of all the other military burdens, such as transport animals, baggage wagons, labourers and sappers.¹³

Between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Visconti were able to build up a complex, permanent military apparatus with a high degree of control over the military forces. Yet the end of the Visconti dominion can also be seen as emblematic of the great political power of some *condottieri* in Italy in the first half of the fifteenth century. Francesco Sforza was the great *condottiero* par excellence. He had provided himself with an organizational structure similar to that of a state and had autonomous diplomatic relationships with other powers. In the 1430s he had an ample administrative apparatus in his service, comprised of notaries, jurists, soldiers, intellectuals, and humanists. He has been defined by historians as a true “non-territorial power”, because his power was distinguished from that of other states only by the absence of a territorial dominion. This trusted staff would have flanked the Visconti bureaucracy following the conquest of the duchy of Milan.¹⁴ On the death of Filippo Maria Visconti, the duchy fell into the hands of Francesco Sforza who had married his daughter Bianca Maria, and who succeeded in prevailing over the ephemeral return to republican government. With Francesco Sforza, an informal direction, entrusted to the loyal collaborators of the Duke, was superimposed over the solid Visconti military administration. His son Galeazzo Maria returned to the policy of increasing the forces directly dependent on the Duke. The household troops and the *lance spezzate*, given a corps of armed crossbowmen, grew to 4,400 in 1470 and to 6,000 in the 1480s, representing two-thirds of the heavy cavalry of the duchy. In the late 15th century the infantry underwent a significant evolution: if in 1462 there were only 1,200 infantry in service in Milan, in 1470 they had risen to 2,270, plus 480 crossbowmen and one hundred handgunners; in 1476, the infantry numbered 10,000 and in the 1480s, following the Burgundian defeats, the infantry was further increased, leading to the

13 Maria Nadia Covini, “Alle spese di Zoan villano”: gli alloggiamenti militari nel dominio visconteo-sforzesco”, *Nuova Rivista Storica*, 76 (1992), pp. 1–56.

14 Anne Katherine Isaacs, “Condottieri, stati e territori nell’Italia centrale”, in *Federico da Montefeltro. Lo stato, le arti, la cultura. I. Lo stato* (Rome 1986), pp. 23–60; Maria Nadia Covini, *Guerra e relazioni diplomatiche in Italia (secoli XIV–XV): la diplomazia dei condottieri*, in *Guerra y Diplomacia en la Europa occidental, 1280–1480*, Actas de la XXXI Semana de Estudios Medievales de Estella, 19 al 23 de julio 2004 (Pamplona 2005), pp. 163–198; *Eadem*, “La fortuna e i fatti dei condottieri “con veritate, ordine e bono inchiostro narrati”: Antonio Minuti e Giovanni Simonetta”, in *Medioevo dei poteri. Studi di storia per Giorgio Chittolini* (Rome 2012), pp. 215–244.

preponderance of foot soldiers in the early modern period.¹⁵ The Duke sought to keep the *condottieri* in a more subordinate role, in support of the permanent forces who were under his direct control.

The *condotte* of the Lombard aristocracy brought together forces gathered on their own fiefs, in the towns or among the allied civic factions. These forces were put at the disposal of the Prince in exchange for his support for the Lords' power in the territory. Recruitment reinforced noble power over the population, both because of its symbolic value, as the Prince could invest *condottieri* with positions of great prominence (for example, the command of military units or the government of a fortress), and because these roles of command put posts at the disposal of the nobility to distribute to their own loyal men. The Lords could obtain new lands in fief and extend their own dominion over surrounding territory. They guaranteed the obedience of important strata of the population to the Duke. Such a system was quite effective, but at the same time it implied a certain instability for both parties. The opening of a new conflict could induce some aristocrats to shift their allegiance, significantly affecting the outcome of the war. The Prince, too, could decide to rely on other *condottieri* or other factions, weakening the power of a family. The Italian Wars provide significant examples of the wish of the *condottieri* to continue to play a role based, at least in part, on autonomous choices.¹⁶

The centralization and fiscal policy implemented by the Sforza alienated them from the support of much of the aristocracy, as the conspiracy against Galeazzo Maria in 1476 demonstrated. This situation worsened even more during the dukedom of Ludovico. The urban aristocracy preferred to turn to the King of France, from whom they erroneously hoped for a government that would be more respectful of their autonomy.¹⁷ This attitude partly explained the Milanese incapacity to resist the Spanish and French armies during the Italian Wars, like the other Italian states, despite the fact that the Sforza had established a permanent army of conspicuous size, setting up a system of

15 Grillo, *Cavalieri e popoli in armi*, pp. 188–203; Philippe Contamine, *La Guerra nel Medioevo*.

16 On the importance of factions for public order and military organization in the Sforza era, see Marco Gentile, "La volontà d'impotenza. Rapporti di forza e gestione del 'disordine' nel ducato sforzesco", in Livio Antonelli, ed., *Le polizie informali*, atti del seminario di studi 28–29 novembre 2003 (Soveria Mannelli 2010), pp. 45–63; Maria Nadia Covini, *L'esercito del duca*, pp. 101–132; Letizia Arcangeli, "Carriere militari dell'aristocrazia padana nelle guerre d'Italia", in Eadem, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia. Ricerche sull'aristocrazia padana nel Rinascimento* (Milan 2003), pp. 71–121.

17 Giorgio Chittolini, "La signoria dei Visconti e degli Sforza"; concerning the outcome, see Letizia Arcangeli, "Ludovico tiranno?", in Eadem, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia*, pp. 123–148.

billeting and payment which was quite modern for the time. Milan's strategic position, certainly more exposed than that of the other Italian states, also influenced the outcome of the war.

The Turning-Point of the Italian Wars

The Italian Wars, which began with the reign of Charles VIII in 1494, were a testing ground for the solidity of the European monarchical states and the efficacy in the field of their military apparatus. The conclusion of the wars, ending with Spanish domination over the State of Milan and the southern kingdoms, constituted the most evident manifestation of the political crisis of the system of the Italian states in the face of the emergence of the military power of the European territorial states. The Italian states, indubitably richer and more evolved than those beyond the Alps, had not known a process of political aggregation of such dimensions, and remained confined to the rank of regional powers. Even if they were at the vanguard of technical mastery in the art of war and the development of the machinery of state bureaucracy and diplomacy, Italian states still had to yield under the pressure of the European monarchies, of much more territorially extensive states, that over the long term could dispose of more ample financial, demographic and political resources, indispensable to sustain military conflicts.¹⁸

The Italian Wars also represented a period of great experimentation with arms and defences, especially in relation to the use of artillery. Regarding the conduct of war, in fact, the passage to modernity was characterized by the ever greater use of artillery, which had already been employed sporadically in the Middle Ages, and by the associated definitive decline of the heavy cavalry, over which prevailed the infantry flanked by light cavalry. The marriage of technical innovation and state transformations considerably modified the formation of military forces in the field. A new phase of the process of militarization was opened, which accompanied the changing forms of the state in early modern Europe. This process was characterized by the growth of military forces, until in the Age of Absolutism there were standing armies in peace and war, numbering hundreds of thousands of men. These could be mobilized thanks to increasing integration of noble élites into government, and the development of internal religious uniformity. The new forms of consensus organized around

18 For some considerations on this topic, see Luciano Pezzolo, "La 'rivoluzione militare'".

the monarchy in the age of confessionalization and absolutism assured internal stability and cooperation with the crown.¹⁹

During the Italian Wars, in successive phases Italian states, with the exception of Venice, directly or indirectly entered into the Habsburg imperial system, which prevailed over Valois France. This system polarized a broad consensus around itself, gradually imposing itself as a bastion of the stability of the Italian states and a bulwark of the Counter Reformation Church. Notable effort and capabilities were brought to bear by Charles V and then Philip II in order to successfully pacify political and factional conflicts, normalize relations between states and settle religious dissent. In the State of Milan, the Spanish military presence assumed much greater weight than in other Italian states, but nevertheless the system of persuasion and organization of consent implemented through marriages, titles, honours and pensions should not be underestimated. They “constituted in an inextricable web the complex and firm foundation of the hegemony of the great monarchy in the peninsula.”²⁰ In this framework, the granting of military positions played a role of primary importance.

In 1535, with the death of Francesco II Sforza, a brief period of imperial dominion began. The great uncertainty regarding the destiny of the state played a significant role in the emergence of a military organization in the territory that Philip II would inherit. Charles V maintained the two most important central institutions established during the French dominion: the governor of the state and the Senate.²¹ They were destined to become emblems, one of the dominion of the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs and the other of the social autonomy of the patriciate for over two centuries. The emperor issued ordinances for the formation of a corps of veterans in the Italian dominions, and appointed trusted soldiers to govern the fortresses of the State of Milan.²² During the governorship of Ferrante Gonzaga, particular care was taken in rethinking the system of strongholds guarding the new dominion as well as in beginning the renovation of fortifications “in the modern style”, to make

19 Jeremy Black, *A Military Revolution? Military Change and European Society 1550–1800* (London 1991).

20 Angelantonio Spagnoletti, *Principi italiani e Spagna nell'età barocca* (Milan 1996).

21 Stefano Meschini, *Il luogotenente del Milanese all'epoca di Luigi XII* in Letizia Arcangeli, ed., *Milano e Luigi XII. Ricerche sul primo dominio francese in Lombardia (1499–1512)*, (Milan 2002), pp. 39–57.

22 Paola Anselmi, “*Conservare lo Stato*”. *Politica di difesa e pratica di governo nella Lombardia spagnola fra XVI e XVII secolo* (Milan 2008), p. 21; José María Alegre Peyrón, *El ejército, gran protagonista de la política exterior de los Austrias españoles* in *La espada y la pluma. Il mondo militare nella Lombardia spagnola cinquecentesca*, Atti del convegno internazionale di Pavia 16–18 ottobre 1997 (Lucca 2000), pp. 11–34.

them able to sustain sieges with heavy artillery, providing them with bastions. Notable efforts in planning and finance were called for. Many of the hundred or so existing castles were dismantled. About twenty remained, concentrated in the cities and on the most important routes giving access to the state. Maintenance work was unending, creating a corresponding financial burden.²³

Careers, Practices and Interests of Lombard Social Groups

The *pax hispanica* enormously exalted the already significant military value of this dominion.²⁴ Contemporary sources and the historiography are in agreement about the fundamental role of the State of Milan as a gateway to Italy, that is, a bulwark for the military control of other Italian dominions, but also as an essential corridor for passage to Flanders and Germany.²⁵ Besides this, at the beginning of the seventeenth century the State of Milan assumed another important military function: it became the permanent drilling-ground of the Spanish monarchy, the place where the armies of *tercios* were concentrated and trained. These forces were employed in the European theatres of war, first in the rebellious Low Countries, then in the areas involved in the Thirty Years' War.²⁶ In its strategic importance, Milan was second only to Flanders. The consequence was that the State of Milan was transformed into a veritable

23 Ferdinando Reggiori, "L'architettura militare durante il periodo della dominazione spagnola", in *Storia di Milano* (Milan 1953–66), vol. 10, pp. 649–670. For an examination of the investment in public buildings in the state of Milan, 76% of which were military in character, see Costanza Caraffa, "Il governo spagnolo come committente di architettura nello Stato di Milano", in Carlo Capra – Claudio Donati, eds., *Milano nella storia dell'età moderna* (Milan 1997), pp. 65–87.

24 Mario Rizzo, "Competizione politico-militare, geopolitica e mobilitazione delle risorse nell'Europa cinquecentesca. Lo Stato di Milano nell'età di Filippo II", in Elena Brambilla – Giovanni Muto, eds., *La Lombardia spagnola. Nuovi indirizzi di ricerca* (Milan, 1997), pp. 371–387; *Idem*, "Milano e le forze del principe. Agenti, relazioni e risorse per la difesa dell'Impero di Filippo II", in José Martínez Millán, ed., *Felipe II (1527–1598). Europa y monarquía católica* (Madrid 1998), vol. I, pp. 731–766; Anselmi, "Conservare lo Stato".

25 Federico Chabod, "Milano contesa e Milano spagnola", in *Storia di Milano* (Rome 1961), vol. 9, pp. 3–170; Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road 1567–1659. The Logistics of Spanish Victory and Defeat in the Low Countries' Wars* (Cambridge 1972). For the seventeenth century see Massimo Carlo Giannini-Gianvittorio Signorotto, eds., *Lo Stato di Milano nel XVII secolo. Memoriali e relazioni* (Rome 2006).

26 Luis A. Ribot García, *Las provincias italianas y la defensa de la Monarquía*, in Aurelio Musi, ed., *Nel sistema imperiale. L'Italia spagnola* (Naples 1994), pp. 67–92; Davide Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona. Guerra, finanze e società nella Lombardia seicentesca (1630–1660)*

receptacle of armed men, without an equal in the rest of Italy, whose *raison d'être* went well beyond the horizons of Italian politics.

The ordinary garrison deemed necessary for the security of the State of Milan was established by Philip II as a *tercio*, the so-called *tercio di Lombardia*, composed of 3,000 infantry, plus 1,200 cavalry. This contingent was principally used to guard strongholds defend cities and the most important communication routes. Governors and castellans, in command of the strongholds, had mixed functions of political and military control over the cities and had relationships of trust with and direct dependence on the governor of the state.²⁷ But during the Spanish domination, the total number of military forces present in the State of Milan were much greater. They numbered on average six or seven *tercios*, equal to around 20,000 men. Such forces were indispensable to meet the requirements of Spanish military commitments in Europe. Together with hundreds of officials and architects from various Italian states, they stayed for some months in the State, where they were lodged and trained.²⁸ This made of the State of Milan an essential component within the context of the military organization of the Spanish imperial system, which had important internal repercussions that began to become evident in the late sixteenth century.

From the military perspective, the Spanish dominion over the *Milanesado* in the sixteenth century also manifested itself in the presence of forces composed of soldiers of Spanish origin.²⁹ But by the late sixteenth century, this state of affairs had already begun to change rapidly, because of the growing military

(Florence 2007). For the formation of the *tercios*, see René Quatrefages, *Los tercios* (Madrid 1983).

27 A. Redaelli, "Governatori cittadini e castellani nello Stato di Milano: un rapporto poco noto nell'ambito del potere locale lombardo", in Paolo Pissavino – Gianvittorio Signorotto, eds., *Lombardia borromaica Lombardia spagnola 1554–1669* (Rome 1995), vol. 1, pp. 457–475; Anselmi, "Conservare lo Stato".

28 Luis a Ribot Garcia, "Milano piazza d'armi della monarchia spagnola", in "Millain the great", *Milano nelle brume del Seicento* (Milan 1989), pp. 349–363; Claudio Donati, "Una provincia in pace, un impero in guerra: osservazioni sullo Stato di Milano durante il regno di Filippo II", in *Il territorio dello Stato di Milano nella prima età spagnola: il Cinquecento* (Milan 1999), pp. 3–13.

29 Federico Chabod, *Lo Stato e la vita religiosa a Milano nell'epoca di Carlo V*, (Turin 1971) (original edn., Tumminelli 1934). In practice, in the case of ordinary soldiers it was often different, above all because of the difficulty of finding Spanish personnel (Paola Anselmi, "Il ruolo della 'piazza' di Como tra la fine del Cinquecento e la metà del Seicento: aspetti politici, militari e sociali", *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 126 (2000), pp. 263–317; Luis Ribot Garcia, "Soldati spagnoli in Italia. Il castello di Milano alla fine del XVI secolo", in Donati-Kroener, *Militari e società civile*, pp. 133–196).

commitment required by the war in Flanders. From this period, with the growing need for soldiers of all ranks, many Italians put themselves at the service of the sovereign, obtaining military posts. Not only the great commanders, such as Alessandro Farnese and Ambrogio Spinola, but also a substantial number of soldiers of Italian origin were employed in all the ranks of the Spanish army. Among them the Lombard contingent was very conspicuous. Entering the service of the sovereign in time of need offered opportunities for rapid advancement, shortening the distance between Milan and Madrid. Consequently, some gentlemen and members of Milanese patrician families decided to put their own patrimonies of relationships and technical knowledge and their own economic resources in the service of Philip II, to bring the rebellious provinces of Flanders back to his obedience. In exchange, they received fiefs, titles, military commands and posts in the Milanese administration. Two examples were Teodoro Trivulzio, who recruited two *tercios* of infantry at his own expense to serve in Flanders, and Ludovico Melzi, commander of the cavalry in Flanders and military theorist. They are only two of many others.³⁰

The revolt in Flanders, therefore, offered local élites the opportunity to be part of the units of the Spanish army, giving concrete evidence of their own loyalty to the new sovereign on the battlefield. This process of integrating the Lombard élites within the Spanish system was accentuated even more during the Thirty Years' War. This war marked a further stage, associated with meeting the challenge of the multiplication of fronts and above all of the simultaneous grave internal crisis of the Spanish empire, which began with the Portuguese, Neapolitan and Catalan revolts. Many exponents of the Lombard patriciate understood that identification with the Spanish cause and their offer of full support to the Crown through tangible demonstrations of fidelity during the most acute phase of the crisis, would permit their integration into the system of honours and rewards that reached from Milan to Madrid, and at the same time it would guarantee a strengthening of the forms of patrician self-government in the State of Milan.

30 For instance, Ludovico Guasco, Sigismondo Sfondrati, Alfonso Carlo Cigogna, Luigi Stampa, Ambrogio Landriani, Critserno Stampa, Alfonso della Somaglia, Ottavio Piatti, Manfrino Castiglioni, Pietro Antonio Lonati, Giovan Battista Guidobono Cavalchini, Carlo Roma, Gaspare Caimi, Giovanni Battista Panigarola (Davide Maffi, "Soldatino dell'Impero. Biografia di un aristocratico lombardo del Seicento: Sigismondo Sfondrati marchese di Montafia", *Società e Storia*, 30, n. 116 (2007), pp. 255–271; *Idem*, "Blandire e premiare. Cavalieri milanesi di Santiago (1560–1700)", *Società e Storia*, 33, n. 127 (2010), pp. 1–27; Angelantonio Spagnoletti, "Le dinastie italiane e la guerra nelle Fiandre", *Società e Storia*, 31, n. 125 (2009), pp. 423–443; Alessandra Dattero, "Ludovico Melzi", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome 2009), vol. 73, pp. 398–400.

This incontrovertible loyalty of the Lombard subjects was manifested in a variety of ways: through abundant financial assets assured to the crown, through the purchase of fiefs and rights instituted in the State of Milan, the grant of loans, the mediation of recruitment of military contingents, the mustering of urban and rural militias for the defence of the territory, the preparation of lodgings, supplies and baggage wagons for the Spanish army. For its part, the monarchy recompensed such commitment from the Lombards by broadening the system of rewards. Between sovereign and subject there was a relationship of reciprocity, consistent with the “spontaneous” offer of services on the part of the Milanese. These could be recompensed by the grant of a royal grace, that took the form of an advancement in the hierarchy of honours that went from Milan to Madrid. The necessity to confront the profound political and military crisis of the 1640s induced Philip IV to widen the process of cooption of peripheral groups: hence the acquisition by Lombards of political and military offices and of dignities previously reserved for the high nobility of Castile. Milanese patricians such as the Borromeo, the Visconti, the Sfondrati, and the Trotti placed their patrimony of prestige, relationships, power over the state, over its cities and countryside at the service of the sovereign; in exchange they obtained posts of great military responsibility which had been the exclusive preserve of Castilians, in the State of Milan as in Spain. They became governors of strongholds, they were given posts in the privy council, but they were also *maestri di campo* of the *tercios* and held seats in the Spanish council of war.³¹ The necessity to guarantee recompense for the commitment shown assured a strengthening both of patrician control over Milanese dignities, such as the Presidency of the Senate as well as that of the two *magistrati delle entrate*, previously a Spanish apanage.³² Military careers thus came to assume great importance within the family strategies of the Lombard patriciate compared to what was happening in other Italian states.³³

31 Gianvittorio Signorotto, “Guerre spagnole, ufficiali lombardi”, in Antonella Bilotto – Piero Del Negro – Cesare Mozzarelli, eds., *I Farnese. Corti, guerra e nobiltà in antico regime*, Atti del convegno di studi, Piacenza 24–16 novembre 1994 (Rome 1997), pp. 367–396; *Idem*, *Milano spagnola. Guerra, istituzioni, uomini di governo (1635–1660)* (Milan 1996); Davide Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona. Guerra, finanze e società nella Lombardia seicentesca (1630–1660)* (Florence 2007), pp. 92–246; *Idem*, “Nobiltà e carriera delle armi nella Milano di Carlo II”, in Alessandra Dattero – Stefano Levati, eds., *Militari in età moderna*, pp. 127–169.

32 Antonio Álvarez-Osorio Alvariano, “Corte y provincia en la monarquía Católica: la corte de Madrid y el Estado de Milán, 1660–1700”, in Elena Brambilla, *La Lombardia spagnola*, pp. 283–341; Signorotto, *Guerre spagnole, ufficiali lombardi*.

33 For precise data on this, with a classification of families by tradition of service, see Claudio Donati, “The profession of arms and the nobility in Spanish Italy: some considerations”, in

An interesting example of this is the career pursued by the Trotti from Alessandria, a family of provincial origin, who could boast old military traditions of service to the Visconti. Luigi, born in 1566, fought in the war in Flanders as a *luogotenente di mastro di campo*, then in the Valtellina during the Thirty Years' War, and was finally in command of a *tercio* in Monferrato. For his constant commitment he was rewarded with the fief of Casal Cermello, given the title of count and a post in the privy council. He ended his career as governor of Como. In 1636 his son Gian Galeazzo enrolled a *tercio* of Italian infantry at his own expense and had the rank of lieutenant of the *mastro di campo generale* and then of lieutenant-general of the light cavalry. He was engaged in the defence of Alessandria and was ambassador to Naples. After various efforts to obtain adequate recognition for the services rendered, he was appointed general of the cavalry in the kingdom of Naples, and finally was admitted into the order of Santiago, with an *encomenda* of 3,000 *scudi*, a seat in the council of war, and an appointment as *mastro di campo generale*. Another significant example is Ercole Visconti. His family boasted traditions of service to the King of Spain. In 1646 the governor of the State of Milan gave Ercole the task of recruiting 1,300 German infantry, which he commanded in the kingdom of Naples during the revolt. After having defended the viceroy's palace, his *tercio* fell into the hands of the rebels, but he succeeded in escaping, disguised as a working man. Afterwards he took part in putting down the revolt in Naples and then that the one in Catalonia. For all these demonstrations of dedication to the Spanish cause he was rewarded with the office of governor of Como, appointed general of the artillery in the kingdom of Sardinia, and given the office of *commissario dello stato* in Milan. He later succeeded in transferring the government of Como to his sons Pierfrancesco and Antonio, instituting a veritable dynasty.³⁴

The quickest way to gain high military command without having to rise through the ranks was by acting as an intermediary in enrollment. By enrolling and equipping a *tercio* at his own expense, a man could be given the title of *mastro di campo*, and enter into the "confidence" of the sovereign. In this way,

Thomas James Dandeleet – John A. Marino (eds), *Spain in Italy. Politics, society and religion 1500–1700* (Leiden-Boston 2007), pp. 299–324.

34 Gianvittorio Signorotto, "Guerre spagnole, ufficiali lombardi". Analogous cases can be found in the second half of the century; an interesting one is that of Antonio Teodoro Trivulzio, who undertook to recruit 800 German troops in 1678 and obtained the post of general of the foreign cavalry (Claudio Donati, "Organizzazione militare e carriera delle armi nell'Italia di antico regime: qualche riflessione", in Maria Luisa Betri – Duccio Bigazzi, eds., *Ricerche di storia in onore di Franco Della Peruta* (Milan 1996), vol. 1, pp. 9–39).

in Lombardy a system analogous to that of the southern feudal levies³⁵ came into being. Another way to serve the sovereign, requiring less commitment, was to command the urban or rural militia, recruited among subjects based on lists drawn up by parish priests. This was not a way to serve permanently, but it was another form of mobilizing the population, called upon to guard cities or the countryside during hostilities. The Milanese patriciate thus made its patrimony of influence and control of the territory available in order to support the Spanish military effort. The governor of the militia could appoint vassals or friends to the subordinate commands and enrol his servants in the towns. In this way, rewards from the sovereign could also have the effect of reinforcing a man's reputation with the lower social ranks, which took concrete form in the grant of lesser offices, in accordance with the practices of patronage.³⁶ The Thirty Years' War, therefore, marked a further accentuation of the integration of Lombardy within the Spanish imperial system. If the Lombards were able to show themselves to be loyal subjects and keep the territory free of the revolts which shook other Spanish dominions, one reason was the intertwining of interests that bound the upper classes more and more indissolubly to the Spanish monarchy.

Among the upper classes the growing military commitment contributed to consolidate the relationship between Lombard subjects and the Spanish monarchy. It favoured the integration of the Lombard patriciate in an imperial system of rewards and honours, and reinforced the system of patrician government in Lombardy. But the ever more onerous Lombard military contribution had many consequences in terms of the civilian population, who were called upon to make the economic, financial and human effort necessary to maintain the numerous billeted contingents, to support the troops on the move, as well as bearing with the war brought directly to Lombard territory and the maintenance and reparation of fortifications necessary for military security. The necessity to provide for quartering so many troops had weighty impact on the relationships between the military and civilians, and aroused protests and interventions of different kinds. Obligations to lodge troops had been imposed

35 For a comparison with the levies in southern Italy, see Tommaso Astarita, "Istituzioni e tradizioni militari", in *Storia del Mezzogiorno*, vol. 9. *Aspetti e problemi del Medioevo e dell'età Moderna* (Naples 1991), pp. 121–156; Spagnoletti, "Onore e spirito nazionale"; Valentina Favarò, *La modernizzazione militare della Sicilia di Filippo II* (Palermo 2009).

36 Mario Rizzo, "I cespiti di un maggiorense lombardo del Seicento: Ercole Teodoro Trivulzio e la milizia forese", *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 120 (1994), pp. 463–477; *Idem*, "Istituzioni militari e strutture socio-economiche in un città d'antico regime. La milizia urbana a Pavia nell'età spagnola", *Cheiron*, 12 (1995) n. 23, pp. 157–185.

on communities in the time of the dukes.³⁷ With the Italian Wars, the multiplication of stable contingents and those in transit generated an enormous increase in military expenditure. Various strategies were implemented to meet these costs. In 1536 Charles v imposed the *mensuale*, a tax amounting to 12,000 *scudi* a month, considered to correspond to the monthly cost of maintaining the army, to which the cavalry tax was added in 1561. The growth in military expenditure linked to the Italian Wars and to the need to renovate the fortifications by building bastions aroused many protests. This led Charles v to seek a better distribution of the burdens, with the launch of the compilation of a new *estimo generale* in 1543.³⁸

Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, following the growth of the military function of Milan, the numbers of troops lodged there grew until there was no longer a set limit.³⁹ The communities to which the troops were sent for billets was based on distributions carried out by the *commissario dello stato*. They had to prepare all that was needed for the lodgings in advance, if they were not to suffer severe retaliation from the military. Considering the constant arrears in the soldiers' payment, billeting communities were bound to advance part of the pay, the so-called *socorro*, that the Milanese finance office would repay later. But in 1584, the finance office declared itself unable

37 Maria Nadia Covini, "Alle spese di Zoan villano".

38 Federico Chabod, *Storia di Milano nell'epoca di Carlo v*, 2nd edn. (Turin 1971), pp. 238–411; Giovanni Vigo, *Fisco e società nella Lombardia del Cinquecento* (Bologna 1979).

39 Even at the end of the maximum military effort deployed during the Thirty Years' War, the military establishment of the State of Milan remained very large. Galeazzo Gualdo Priorato in his *Relazione della città e Stato di Milano*, drawn up in 1666, gave a detailed description of the garrison forces in the years following the Peace of the Pyrenees that brought the Franco-Spanish conflict to an end in 1659. Even though there was no open war, the State was garrisoned by three *tercios* of Spanish infantry with all the General Staff and officers, that is, the *tercio* of Lombardy, composed of 19 companies of veterans, the *tercio* of Savoy, composed of 21 companies, of whom 19 were Spanish and two Burgundian and Irish, and the *tercio* of Naples, composed of 19 Spanish companies. The three *tercios* were defined as being composed of soldiers who were "all veterans, and numerous", and should therefore be understood to be at the full strength of 3,000 men each. To these, 9 free companies of Grisons and the garrisons of the fortresses were added. Besides the infantry, there was the cavalry with 11 companies of men-at-arms who numbered in all 500 horse, 10 companies of state cavalry composed of another 500 horse, 8 companies of extraordinary cavalry, and 4 companies of German cavalry. Gualdo Priorato further recorded that in the city of Milan there were also six *tercios* of urban militia, armed by the civic public armoury (Galeazzo Gualdo Priorato, *Relazione della città e Stato di Milano sotto il governo dell'eccellentissimo signor don Luigi di Guzman Ponze di Leone* (Milan 1666)).

to do so, and shifted this repayment onto the provinces. The aggravation to the billeting communities which followed due to missed repayments, finally brought about the establishment of the *equalanza* in 1597. This was a redistribution of the military burdens on the whole state, through compensation for the billeting communities entrusted to the *congregazione dello stato*. Having originated as a patrician organ of representation of the interests of the cities and *contadi* during the operations to compile the *estimo* of Charles V, the congregation from then on saw its power increase enormously, in consequence of its control of the distribution of the military burdens within the State of Milan.⁴⁰ The military emergency also led to the undermining of the traditional civic privileges of exemption from billeting field troops, as well as multiplying the taxes destined for military expenses.⁴¹

Already in the late sixteenth century it was becoming ever more evident that the costs of the enormous standing military apparatus in the state exceeded the need for mere defence of the territory and were beyond the capacity of its tax base. Consequently, through periodic *socorros*, resources were drained from the other dominions of the monarchy, especially from Naples, to support the military burdens of Milan. But the crisis of the 1630s and 1640s blocked the flow of money, forcing Milan to sustain the enormous military force deployed by itself. This increased the pressure from the soldiers on the population, on which they found themselves to be more and more dependent for their very survival. In this time of emergency, the abuses perpetrated by the troops

40 Vigo, *Fisco e società*; Mario Rizzo, "Il processo di perequazione degli oneri militari nella Lombardia cinquecentesca", in Mario Rizzo – José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez – Gaetano Sabatini, eds., *Le forze del principe. Recursos, instrumentos y límites en la práctica del poder soberano en los territorios de la monarquía hispánica*, Actas del seminario internacional, Pavia, 22–24 septiembre del 2000 (Murcia 2004), pp. 469–538; Davide Maffi, *Il baluardo della corona*, pp. 247–304; Alessandro Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio. Alloggiamenti militari e "case herme" nello Stato di Milano (secoli XVI–XVII)* (Florence 2009); *Idem*, "Guerra, élites locali e monarchia nella Lombardia dei Seicento. Per un'interpretazione in chiave di compromesso di interessi", *Società e Storia*, 32 (2009), n. 123, pp. 3–30.

41 From the early years of the seventeenth century, the governor Pedro Enríquez de Acevedo, conte di Fuentes recruited 24,000 soldiers for the Milanese. Such a substantial garrison was distributed among the cities and the *contadi* in accordance with the *mensuale*. The places that remained without billets had to make a proportionate contribution (Paola Anselmi, "*Conservare lo Stato*"). On the era of Fuentes, see Fernandez Albaladejo, "De 'llave de Italia' a 'corazón de la monarquía': Milán y la monarquía católica en el reinado de Felipe III", in Pissavino, *Lombardia borromaica*, vol. 1, pp. 41–91; Gianvittorio Signorotto, "Milán. Política exterior", in J. Martínez Millán – Maria Antonietta Visceglia, eds., *La monarquía de Felipe III* (Madrid 2008), vol. 3, pp. 1032–1075.

consisted in demands for payments and contributions in kind in excess of the regulations, with associated mistreatment of the population to have such demands met, in the increase in the number of soldiers on paper with a disproportionate increase in payments imposed on the communities, on excessive provision of wagons and transport for artillery, in burdensome billeting of cavalry with frequent replacement of the horses.

The authorities were able to respond in various ways. In 1638 a commission was instituted to examine the excesses of the troops. Representatives of the cities and *contadi* could send petitions to the commission concerning the damages and abuses suffered at the hands of the military. The sovereign renounced the traditional inquisitorial *visitas*, by which he periodically sent into the dominions a member of the Castilian high nobility to verify the causes of bad local administration, preferring instead to strengthen the instruments of mediation with subjects. The commission on the excesses of the troops was in fact composed of high Lombard and Spanish military officers and civilian officials and it appeared to respond better to the traditional norms governing relations between the sovereign and subjects; that is, strengthened the conviction of the population that if the loving and magnanimous sovereign were informed of the suffering endured by his subjects, he would come to their defence, also against perfidious or indolent ministers. The commission proved to be a means increasing the loyalty of subjects in adverse circumstances, offering more opportunities for petitions to the merciful throne of His Majesty, rather than being a place where real corrective measures were applied to the problems that had arisen. An analogous instrument was the despatch of Milanese envoys to Madrid to make the case of the suffering of the Lombard population caused by billeting and the financial crisis.⁴² In the end, these instruments accentuated the pressure on Madrid by the Milanese patriciate, which succeeded in snatching greater positions of autonomy and liberty in its prerogatives of local self-government.

In terms of the practical requirement to deal with the problem of billets, the forms of self-organization that local institutions gave themselves were more effective. Following models typical of the *ancien régime* state, they provided the great majority of the services needed in defence of the collective, while only later did elements of the state organization take on these functions. If, therefore, proper barracks for lodging soldiers were instituted only in the late

42 Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio*; on the *visitas* see Mario Rizzo, "Finanza pubblica, impero e amministrazione nella Lombardia spagnola: le 'visitas generales'", in Pissavino, *Lombardia borromaica*, pp. 303–361.

eighteenth century,⁴³ during the preceding phase there was no lack of initiatives by local bodies to deal with the emergency of military billets. Above all, it was the cities of the State which implemented an initial separation—if it can be called that, because it was still only partial—of quartered troops from the civilian population. The traditional procedure, which had previously been tried for the billeting of fixed contingents of the civic military guard, was the lease of houses for the use of the soldiers in the different quarters of the city, sometimes distributed by parish. These allowed for the avoidance of direct billeting in the homes of civilians, even if it did not amount to a real separation of civilians from soldiers, who did not have circumscribed quarters in a specific area of the city assigned to them, or limitations on their movements. The city took care of organizing the provision of furniture and utensils, appointing a delegate of the city council, and calling for the reimbursement of any damage caused by the soldiers. From the early years of the seventeenth century there were experiments, in the cities, with contracts for the provision of household goods, or for finding houses for soldiers' lodging. The city sometimes granted to contractors the collection of some taxes as a recompense. Information about these first forms of territorial organization to handle the billeting problems which had increased enormously from the early seventeenth century is available for Como, Pavia and Milan.⁴⁴ Analogous experiments for the *contadi* did not meet with continuous success, because they caused a growth in fiscal pressure. When faced with having to advance cash for at least part of the sums needed to prepare the quarters to the contractors, the rural populations, who had little money at their disposal, often preferred to return to the system of billeting soldiers in their own homes.⁴⁵

Things changed perceptibly with the decision in 1662 to distribute the military burdens over the whole state, through the general division of levies for pay, *soccorsi* and forage and the stipulation of a general contract, called "*rimplazzo*", for the provision of quarters for billets.⁴⁶ The task of taking care of the entire

43 Alessandra Dattero, "Un aspetto del riformismo austriaco: caserme e mondo urbano nella Lombardia del Settecento", in Claudio Donati, *Militari e società civile*, pp. 401–446.

44 Davide Maffi, "Alloggiamenti militari e comunità locali: Pavia e il suo contado nel '600", *Annali di Storia Pavese*, 27, 1999, pp. 325–338; Paola Anselmi, "Il ruolo della 'piazza' di Como"; Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio*.

45 Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio*.

46 As was written in a petition to the sovereign, "the vast bulk of the military burden on the state of Milan is based on two poles: one, the pay, *soccorsi* and forage, that from 1662 until now have been divided up between cities and provinces, regulated by the quotas stipulated in the allotments issued by the office of the general commissariat of this army; the other, billeting, which amounts to the provision of furnishings and houses to the whole army, wood to the infantry and the corps of guards, and that from the said year of

operation was entrusted to the *congregazione dello stato*, the organ that during the military emergency acted as intermediary between subjects and sovereign. Regarding the administration of *rimplazzo*, the congregation could assume a determining role in the determination of the tax quotas in the *contadi*, in the control of military expenditure for the maintenance of the contingents lodged in the State of Milan, and in sending its own envoys to Madrid to plead the fiscal rights of Lombard subjects.⁴⁷

The last decades of the seventeenth century marked a “phase of unstoppable disengagement from loyalty to Spain, that arose above all from the perception of its diminished role among the European powers”.⁴⁸ The Milanese patriciate also began to look elsewhere, although at the time abandoning the traditional policy of alliance with Spain appeared to be a great risk. Together with the crisis of the Spanish monarchy was the rise of the Empire, which from the time of the abdication of Charles V had not threatened Spanish hegemony in the peninsula. Leopold I, victor against the Turks, began to claim the ancient rights of feudal superiority over the greater part of the states in northern and central Italy, asking for subsidies for the war against the Turks. The State of Milan was the strategic base for imperial commissioners, soldiers and diplomats, sent to “expand the Empire in Italy”.⁴⁹ Milanese patricians began drawing nearer to the court of Vienna, where young men were sent to serve as pages at court (both in Vienna and in Madrid). Afterwards they joined the ranks of the army which would shortly make a victorious entry into Milan. On the arrival

1662 until now has been put into effect through the procedures of the contract called *rimplazzo*”, Memorandum from the State of Milan to the sovereign, not dated but from 1686–91, cited in Alessandra Dattero, *Il “governo militare” dello Stato di Milano nel primo Settecento. Saggio storico e inventario della serie Alte Feldakten del Kriegsarchiv di Vienna* (Milan 2001, p. 31).

47 Alessandro Buono, “Guerra, élites locali e monarchia”; Davide Maffi, *La cittadella in armi. Esercito, società e finanza nella Lombardia di Carlo II. 1660–1700* (Milan 2010), pp. 242–290. For developments in the eighteenth century, see Alessandra Dattero, “Con un nuovo incanto è da sperarsi un ribasso maggiore nel prezzo. Progetti di riordino degli appalti militari nella Lombardia Austriaca del XVIII secolo”, *Società e Storia*, 36, n. 139 (2013), pp. 37–80.

48 Spagnoletti, *Principi italiani e Spagna*, p. 237.

49 Salvatore Pugliese, *Le prime strette dell’Austria in Italia* (Milan-Rome 1931); “Dilatar l’Impero in Italia. Asburgo e Italia nel primo Settecento”, *Cheiron*, 21 (1994); Spagnoletti, *Principi italiani e Spagna*, pp. 229–246; Claudio Donati, “L’Italia nel periodo dell’ascesa della monarchia austriaca (fine secolo XVII–inizio secolo XVIII): aspetti militari”, in *Première rencontre franco-italienne d’histoire militaire*, Vicennes, 8–9 octobre 1999 (Vicennes 2001), pp. 7–18; Mathias Schettger-Marcello Verga, eds., *L’Impero e l’Italia nella prima età moderna* (Bologna-Berlin 2006).

of Prince Eugene at Milan, there were Milanese patricians such as Annibale Visconti, Carlo Francesco Stampa, Antonio Sormani, Giovanbattista Landriani, Camillo Litta, Camillo Amedeo Olgiati, and Claudio Rasini among his troops. All these men had already entered imperial service in the late seventeenth century.⁵⁰ The new era seemed to be in continuity with the preceding one from the perspective of the loyalty and service of the Lombard patriciate; Charles VI also continued to present himself in the Italian dominions as the legitimate successor to the king of Spain. But the outcome of the wars of succession placed Lombardy securely in the context of a Habsburg monarchy in transformation, involving it in the vast project of reforming the traditional structures of the state and of the army which were carried out by the Habsburgs during the eighteenth century, marking the passage into a new epoch.

In conclusion, during the period under consideration, a huge military apparatus was formed in the State of Milan. It drained financial resources, technical capacities, and human capital towards war, and imposed itself as a preponderant factor in family strategies and the daily life of the population. The themes which I have discussed here seem to show the culmination in the ever closer intertwining of the military world and civilian society, but they also show clear signs of the initial forms of separation of soldiers from the rest of the population and the tendency to specialize and reserve the use of weapons to the armed forces.⁵¹ Significant changes in this direction also manifested in the new conception of urban spaces in Lombard cities, which assumed a new form following the demolition of city walls in the late eighteenth century and the designation of barracks for billeting soldiers. Certainly this was far from the complete segregation of the military from civilians; in fact, the wives and children of the soldiers had unrestricted access to the barracks, and there was still much contact with the civilian population.⁵² But from this moment on, there were unequivocal signs of a specific social and professional place for the military, together with the more profound integration of soldiers within the state.

50 Eric Lund, "The generation of 1683. Habsburg General Officers and the military technical Corps, 1686–1723", *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchiv*, 46 (1998), pp. 189–213; Alessandra Dattero, *Il "governo militare" dello Stato di Milano*, pp. 69–84.

51 Livio Antonelli, "Le licenze di porto d'armi nello Stato di Milano tra Seicento e Settecento: duttilità di una fonte", in Livio Antonelli-Claudio Donati, eds., *Al di là della storia militare: una ricognizione sulle fonti*, atti del seminario di studi di Messina, 12–13 novembre 1999 (Soveria Mannelli 2004), pp. 99–125; Claudio Donati, "La trattatistica sull'onore e il duello tra Cinquecento e Seicento: tra consenso e censura", *Studia Borromaica*, 14 (2000), pp. 39–56; Chittolini, "Il militare", pp. 53–102.

52 Alessandra Dattero, "Un aspetto del riformismo austriaco"; for a comparative view, see James D. Tracy, ed., *City Walls. The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective* (Cambridge 2000).

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Nobility in Lombardy between the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age

Federico Del Tredici

Introduction

In the history of Lombardy, it is difficult to identify more significant moments of rupture than the three decades of wars that led the Duchy of the Visconti and of the Sforza families to lose its political autonomy and, ultimately, to join the composite Empire of Charles v.¹ It is equally difficult to find more relevant ruptures in current trends of historiographic research on Lombardy. The year 1499 represents a scholarly watershed between the history of the Middle Ages and that of the Modern Age of this region. Such threshold has been a decisive factor in keeping apart—with rare exceptions—two distinct scholarly communities. In other words, this represents a very visible border not only in the study of political-institutional history but also in other areas such as economic history.

Over the years, the very theme of nobility has admittedly proven to be one of the few catalysts to encourage meaningful, albeit implicit rather than explicit, dialogue between medievalists and early modernists. Independently of the historiographical clarifications and distinctions I will later introduce, the definition of nobility, here proposed for the period of Spanish rule, remains the core point. Such definition considers this aristocracy in terms of a patrician nobility and in relation to its correspondence with the ruling class of the city. This was therefore an urban nobility, self-regulated—*sibi princeps*—which was far-removed from the sovereign and had therefore acquired autonomous ways of legitimizing itself. One must then ask which differences are to be found between these years and the not so very distant past when Milan had its own prince. Significant research ostensibly focused on the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century aristocracy also engaged with the fifteenth century: from Giulio Vismara's early studies concentrated on the institutions of the nobility

1 For a general overview, see the essays by Andrea Gamberini and Stefano D'Amico in this volume.

to the studies of the most prominent theoretician of the patrician system, Cesare Mozzarelli, and many other recent investigations.²

With regard to the medievalists, Spanish rule placed significant emphasis on the civic and municipal dimension of the nobility, which naturally lent itself to merge with the traditional emphasis given to the role of the city in the political and social history of Lombardy, and of Italy. Therefore, among the scholars of the Duchy of the Visconti-Sforza families, the success of historiographical research into the patrician class in the early modern age remains a point of reference for reconsidering recurrent questions. To what extent is it possible, focusing on aristocracy, not to consider the fifteenth century as an antecedent of the patrician age? Is it, in other words, correct to identify in the Lombard aristocracy of the fifteenth century a specific urban dimension? Or, on the other hand, how significant was the space of the nobles ('the gentlemen') that a well-known and much-cited passage in Machiavelli describes as the 'enemies of every civilization', used, as they were, 'to ruling castles' and keeping 'subjects who obey them'?³

Cities and Castles. Nuances in the Lombard Nobility of the Fifteenth Century

Let us begin with the questions discussed above and, from the recognizable weight exercised by a well-established nobility outside the big cities of the Duchy well into the fifteenth century. The answer of modern historiography to this issue began in the 1970s with research carried out by Giorgio Chittolini, which is the real point of departure of later works and discussions.⁴ I will mention these and the nuances of the current historiographic debate below. Firstly,

2 Giulio Vismara, *Le istituzioni del patriziato*, in *Storia di Milano* 11 (Milan, 1958), pp. 225–282; Cesare Mozzarelli, "Strutture sociali e formazioni statuali a Milano e Napoli tra '500 e '700", in *Società e storia* 3 (1978), pp. 431–463; Claudio Donati, *Il patriziato e le sue istituzioni*, in Franco Della Peruta, ed., *Storia illustrata di Milano* 4 (Milan, 1993), pp. 1041–1060; Cinzia Cremonini, *Il 'gran teatro' della nobiltà. L'aristocrazia milanese tra Cinque e Settecento*, in Cinzia Cremonini, ed., *Teatro genealogico delle famiglie nobili milanesi* (Mantua, 2003), pp. 11–56. Research carried out on the world of Lombard aristocrats in the fifteenth and sixteenth century by Letizia Arcangeli stands out for its breadth: cf. firstly Letizia Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini di Lombardia. Ricerche sull'aristocrazia padana nel Rinascimento* (Milan, 2003).

3 Nicolò Machiavelli, *Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di Tito Livio*, l. 1 c. 55.

4 Giorgio Chittolini, *La formazione dello Stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado. Secoli XIV e XV* (Turin, 1979); Id., *Signorie rurali e feudi alla fine del medioevo*, in Giuseppe Galasso, ed., *Storia d'Italia* 4 (Turin, 1981), pp. 597–676.

it is however important to reiterate the most important and least controversial result yielded by such long period of studies initiated by Chittolini; the real existence of such gentlemen in Lombardy as those described by Machiavelli. Well into the fifteenth century, strongholds of seigneurial power affected the countryside of the Duchy, in stark contrast to what had happened in Tuscany and Veneto, where by the end of the Middle Ages, the sphere of influence of the nobility was essentially confined to urban spaces.⁵ In some cases, these were lands dominated by ancient, powerful noble families, who had resisted the Ducal expectation of reducing their powers—considered private and personal—within the legal terms of the fief.⁶ In other circumstances, these were more recent constructions, born out of ducal concession rather than referring to a long-established custom. Large possessions given to *condottieri*, to members of the most important magistrates, to financial operators—such as the famous Borromeo family—who were able to alleviate the financial issues of the Duchy's treasury. In these cases, the exercises of feudal prerogatives had a financial rather than political meaning, even though the outcome of such donations was not predictable. This was in fact the case with the Borromeo family; although recently established and of feudal nature in origin, the rule over their territories did not lead to an uncertain existence nor were they without jurisdictional forces. On the contrary, in two generations, the lands that Filippo Maria Visconti had conceded to his chancellor Vitaliano Borromeo to repay existing debts became a state within the state, very little different, then, in terms of quality and quantity to the territories belonging to the oldest families of Lombardy.⁷

It goes without saying that oversimplified representations of the vast world of seigneurs and feuds of Lombardy must be avoided. The mode of exercising power and the quality of such power as well as the origins and size of the possessions could be very diverse. It is, however, difficult to mistake the reach of such phenomenon and the grave disjuncture it caused on what was (or ought to have been) the normal administrative structure of the Duchy, hinging on the jurisdiction of the various city communes each one of which was in

5 For a contrast with the Italian framework: Renato Bordone, Guido Castelnuovo, Gian Maria Varanini, *Le aristocrazie dai signori rurali al patriziato* (Rome-Bari, 2004).

6 On the argument of feudal politics see at least Chittolini, *La formazione*, pp. 36–100; Federica Cengarle, *Immagine di potere e prassi di governo. La politica feudale di Filippo Maria Visconti* (Rome 2006).

7 Giorgio Chittolini, *Borromeo Vitaliano*, in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* 13 (Rome 1971), pp. 72–75.

charge of its own countryside.⁸ The inhabitants of Parma lamented to Duke Filippo Maria Visconti that ‘nobles and powerful lords of the manors’ (*nobiles castellani*) exercised their power in such a way as to jeopardize the jurisdictional and financial purviews of the city on its territories thus transforming the commune into an ‘armless body’.⁹ The concepts and words used in almost all cities of the state were similar in tone to these of the *cives Parmenses* of 1421.¹⁰

The distinctive feature of the seigneurial power in the rural areas seems to have been the consensus that his subjects accorded to it, which offset the favour and benefits that the *dominus* had to guarantee for these very men. The language of friendship often spoken between dominator and dominated emphasized the reciprocity of the agreement, which was strong and genuine. The language of the aristocrats and their peasants entailed a proximity, at times even physical, that scandalised the non-Lombard onlookers.¹¹ It is obvious that in many cases such *amicitia* and proximity could cede to often-violent conflicts, or indeed, could even disappear over strong divergences of intentions. This does not mean that their subjects’ loyalty—ultimately to be shown tangibly even with the military service—was extorted and without compensation. What the *homines* expected and often obtained from their *dominus* was mainly protection, which could take the form of fiscal protection translated in privileged conditions of exemptions from the taxes normally due. Such protection was also physical and military, offered by the castle that, in times of need, opened its doors to the peasants thus guaranteeing their safety. An example of this relationship can be found in the jurisdiction exercised by the Count Giovanni Anguissola over some villages in the rural area of Piacenza in the early fifteenth century which seemed founded on *voluntary* ‘obedience’ and on ‘good love’ attributed to him by the inhabitants. Giovanni reciprocated such ‘love’ in two ways: providing forts in which the inhabitants could find refuge in case of war and combat, and offering fiscal privileges to all of those who lived under his jurisdiction.¹² The nexus between castles and obedience cited earlier from Machiavelli’s *Discorsi* becomes self-explanatory. The second part, his reference to the ‘hostility towards civilization’ shown by the Lombard noblemen, is fundamental and necessitates further discussion.

8 Cf. Gamberini in this volume.

9 Chittolini, *La formazione*, pp. 103–104.

10 See examples in Marco Gentile, *Terra e poteri. Parma e il Parmense nel ducato visconteo all’inizio del Quattrocento* (Milan, 2001), p. 34.

11 See Donati, *L’idea di nobiltà*, p. 431. Also Della Misericordia’s and Gamberini’s chapters in the present volume.

12 Chittolini, *La formazione*, pp. 181–253 (194 onward in particular).

The ownership of castles and the exercise of seigneurial and feudal rights in the rural areas, did not transform the aristocracy of the Duchy into an alien body in relation to the world of the cities. This world was in fact one in which the fortunes of many such families of gentlemen had taken roots. The Anguissola family (thirteenth and fourteenth century) had established its mercantile success before ruling over the rural area, and, until that point, had retained a prominently urban and commercial profile. Even the minor branches of the Visconti family, who retained the control of several fortresses in the Milanese territories during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, came from firmly urban origins. Only later on, from the mid-thirteenth century, did they become interested in the development of seigneurial rights in rural areas.¹³

Above and beyond issues concerning the ancient or recent origins of this nobility, the crucial point to note here is the extremely tight bond that *even at the end of the Middle Ages* united the high aristocracy with the various towns in the State. These intense relationships with one or, in rare cases, more than one city were, for the Lombard gentlemen, the rule and not the exception, as a firm *liaison* with the urban population was a way through which they were able to corroborate their power. As Marco Gentile has highlighted, this was a truly 'organic' relationship with the city that established for the seigneurial lineage the *conditio sine qua non* for a 'step up the ladder', the decisive element in determining the prominence of a house on a regional scale, and also its lasting fortune.¹⁴ The voice of the 'landed aristocracy' did not reach the cities of the Duchy as a distant and rather *démodé* echo of a world that was irreducibly other, as did the lament of the last of the Guidi counts in Florence in 1440.¹⁵ Indeed, the voice of the Lombard lords of the manors reached the cities as a powerful call, able to exert profound influence over the voice of the city itself, or even to obscure it. This fact is clearly visible, for example, if we return to analyse the chapters mentioned above, with which in 1421 the citizens of Parma complained about the excessive power of the landed aristocracy, which was seriously damaging the urban prerogatives. Names and surnames of the guilty

13 Elisa Occhipinti, *I Visconti di Milano nel secolo XIII*, in *Archivio storico lombardo* 136 (2010), pp. 11–23; Paolo Grillo, *Milano in età comunale (1183–1276). Istituzioni, società, economia* (Spoleto, 2001), pp. 291–296.

14 Marco Gentile, *Fazioni al governo. Politica e società a Parma nel Quattrocento* (Rome, 2009), p. 89.

15 I refer to the *Lamento del conte di Poppi*, a poetic work that circulated in Florence after the castle of Poppi was taken, the last seigneurial stronghold of the Guidi counts. The work makes his pleas 'more nostalgic than political': Marco Bicchierai, *Ai confini della Repubblica di Firenze. Poppi dalla signoria dei conti Guidi al vicariato del Casentino* (Florence, 2005), p. 281.

followed the recriminations, a list that included the names of Guido Torelli, the Fieschi family, and the Malaspina family. The really 'big fish', the representatives of the most powerful houses in the territories of Parma, were, however, missing: the Pallavicini, Rossi, Sanvitale, and Correggio families.¹⁶ Clearly, this did not constitute an oversight, nor indeed was it a coincidence. The point was that the *nobiles castellani* Pallavicini, Rossi, Sanvitale and Correggio were so rich in *friends* in the countryside, but at the same time did not lack *friends* in the city either. They ruled over four *fazioni* (or *squadre*) that dominated the political life of Parma, conditioning it even in moments in which an essentially civic or municipal discourse dominated, as was the case in 1421. The absence of the leading nobility of Parma from the anti-nobility chapters of 1421, therefore, reflects a substantial presence: that of those same gentlemen within urban life in Parma.

The projection of the *nobiles castellani* into the urban environment, the use of seignorial privileges in rural areas, and the ability to mobilize numerous and loyal troops, were all reciprocally linked. Furthermore, the existence of civic parties ruling over the powerful noble houses was, in fact, the strongest indication of this projection, which was highly visible in Parma and throughout the cities of the Duchy. It is no coincidence, then, that the study of the factions is closely tied to recent historiographic research into the world of Lombard aristocracy.¹⁷ In the scope of this essay, I would not be able to do justice to the depth and breadth of the research questions that have arisen as a result of the recent debate concerning the nature and intensity of the phenomenon of factions. It is suffice, in this context, to reiterate the relevance of this phenomenon before moving on to highlighting the primary point of interest to us here. That is the serious *vulnus* frequently brought about by the pervasive presence of *squadre* and factions to the civic dimensions of urban politics and to the very identity of Lombard urban communities. Active participation in municipal life was often mediated by membership to a faction; an obvious example of this is the official partition of the councils of many cities of the Duchy by *squadra*. Limiting ourselves to the example of just one city, Cremona, here in the era

¹⁶ Gentile, *Terra e poteri*, p. 35.

¹⁷ On the factions in late medieval Lombardy, see Marco Gentile, ed., *Guelfi e ghibellini nell'Italia del Rinascimento* (Rome, 2005); Id., *Fazioni al governo*; Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini*, pp. 365–419; Massimo Della Misericordia, "Dividersi per governarsi: fazioni, famiglie aristocratiche e comuni in Valtellina in età viscontea", in *Società e storia* 86 (1999), pp. 715–766; Id., *Divenire comunità. Comuni rurali, identità sociali e territoriali in Valtellina e nella montagna lombarda nel tardo medioevo* (Milan, 2006), pp. 627 sgg.; Andrea Gamberini, *La città assediata. Poteri e identità politiche a Reggio in età viscontea* (Rome, 2003).

of Sforza rule, it was not possible for a citizen to be a member of the council if he was not active in one of the three town parties that, entirely legitimately, divided up control of the seats of the council.¹⁸ On occasions it can appear that the cities lacked any sense of identity and were merely made up of a sum of their parts, with municipal institutions that did not have autonomy from the parties that so profoundly conditioned the town's existence. In the early fifteenth century, the *comune* of Parma, for example, could be seen as being characterized by a striking 'political inconsistency'.¹⁹ The political consistency could, however, be found fully present in the four factions of the city, guided by the leading noble houses of the area.

At this point, we can return to the 'enmity toward civilization' highlighted in the *Discorsi* of Machiavelli as a defining quality of the Lombard gentlemen. This enmity is not to be understood as extraneousness or distance with regard to the urban world, but rather as an outcome of an excessive proximity to it. Paradoxically, the fact that the nobles had friends *inside* the city made the nobles 'who command castles' enemies *of* the city, or better still, to once again paraphrase Machiavelli, 'of political existence'. It was indeed this very proximity of the gentlemen to the urban world that created the potentially most damaging element to the unity of civic bodies, and to their 'equality'. It was this proximity that suggested partisan separations amongst influential citizens, as it opposed the establishment of 'civilization', here meaning a government established around the primacy of a civic identity over the sum of its parts, able to impose a decidedly municipal voice.

Faction divisions were certainly not the only source of conflict that existed in urban centres in Lombardy, and yet, in these cities, neither was an existence marked by divisive power an inescapable fact without alternatives. In the fifteenth century, Lodi was a divided city, profoundly conditioned by the political prominence of the two local factions, who ruled over the powerful aristocratic consortia that had formed around the Vistarini and Fissiraga families. Over the course of the fifteenth century, however, there was no lack of open challenges to the power balance of the factions, nor of government proposals that were less responsive to the influence of the partisan division.²⁰ This was

18 Andrea Gamberini, *Cremona nel Quattrocento. La vicenda politica ed istituzionale*, in Giorgio Chittolini, ed., *Storia di Cremona. Il Quattrocento. Cremona nel ducato di Milano* (Azzano San Paolo, 2008), pp. 2–39.

19 Gentile, *Terra e poteri*, p. 187.

20 Marzia De Luca, *Tra Quattro e Cinquecento. Il governo della città di Lodi dagli Sforza alle dominazioni straniere*, in Matteo Schianchi, ed., *Lodi, Estado de Milan. L'amministrazione*

also the case in Pavia, for example.²¹ In more general terms, many scholars have highlighted the stronger tone adopted by genuinely civic motions and by anti-factionary polemics from the 1430s and 1440s.²² Much can be said about the broad and lively historiographical debate concerning factions, the role of the aristocracy, and civic identity,²³ however, it is now necessary to draw our attention onto other fringes of Lombard nobility who were not among the leading gentlemen.

The term 'noble' in the Visconti and Sforza eras was by no means limited to those in possession of castles and jurisdictions, who were the point of reference for a vast array of urban and rural *friends*, indeed, the term could be applied to individuals of very different extraction, and particularly to exponents of notable large urban classes. In an animated environment such as that of Lombardy in the fifteenth century, therefore, the term could be applied to practitioners of law, merchants, moneylenders, doctors, notaries, men variously engaged in careers within state and civic offices. With regard to Milanese notarial deeds, for example, the attribute *nobilis* could increasingly refer to citizens who were 'dottori, procuratori, notai, *mercatores*' [doctors, lawyers, notaries, and merchants], in all cases men who were rather distant from the vertices of local society.²⁴ A rather generous use of the term is also recorded in the list (*matricula*) of noble houses of Milan for whom access to the cathedral chapter was reserved, which went on to constitute one of the most important instruments in deciding issues concerning nobility in the capital. Dating

della città di Lodi 1494–1706 (Azzano San Paolo, 2010), pp. 13–101; Potito D'Arcangelo, *Lodi e il Lodigiano nel Quattrocento*, forthcoming.

- 21 Nadia Covini, "La bilancia dritta". *Pratiche di governo, leggi e ordinamenti nel ducato sforzesco* (Milan, 2007), pp. 166 sgg.
- 22 See for instance, Chittolini, *La formazione*, pp. VII–XL; Id., *Città, comunità e feudi negli stati dell'Italia centro-settentrionale (secoli XIV–XVI)* (Milan, 1996); Francesco Somaini, *Processi costitutivi, dinamiche politiche e strutture istituzionali dello Stato visconteo-sforzesco*, in Giuseppe Galasso, ed., *Storia d'Italia* 6 (Turin, 1998), pp. 681–825.
- 23 Cf. Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini*; Marco Gentile, *Aristocrazia signorile e costituzione dello stato visconteo-sforzesco*, in Marco Gentile e Pierre Savy, eds., *Noblesse et états princiers en Italie et en France au XV^e siècle* (Rome, 2009), pp. 125–155; Andrea Gamberini, *Oltre le città. Aspetti territoriali e culture aristocratiche nella Lombardia del tardo medioevo* (Rome, 2009), pp. 9–51. For a summary of the debate: Federico Del Tredici, *Lombardy under the Visconti and the Sforza*, in Andrea Gamberini, Isabella Lazzarini, eds., *The Italia Renaissance State* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 156–176.
- 24 Letizia Arcangeli, *Alle origini del Consiglio dei sessanta decurioni: ceti e rappresentanza a Milano tra Massimiliano Sforza e Francesco I di Valois (maggio 1515–luglio 1516)*, in Stefano Levati, Marco Meriggi, eds., *Con la ragione e con il cuore. Studi dedicati a Carlo Capra* (Milan, 2008), pp. 33–75.

from the end of the fourteenth century and updated throughout the fifteenth century, the *matricula* is easily explained: it consisted of nothing more than a long list of agnations, over 150, who qualified as 'nobiles'.²⁵ More than 150 surnames in a large city like Milan may not seem to be many. However, often, the agnations listed numbered dozens and dozens of members, who, as one would expect, represented a variety of different levels of power, prosperity, and political influence. This document listed only kinship, and within each agnation there was nothing to distinguish the powerful magnates from relatives of much more humble origins; no specification existed to establish more stringent and individual criteria for nobility. According to the *matricula*, count Ugolino Crivelli, seigneur of fiefs in Lomellina and leading representative of his house, was indeed noble. However, by simply belonging to the same lineage, all his relatives who were of much more modest means, the many Crivelli who filled the streets of Milan, were likewise, nobles.

What makes the *matricula* particularly interesting, and also further complicates the matter, is the fact that the idea of nobility transmitted within did not stop at the city walls, nor was it limited to the already large urban dimension. In this bare-bones list of 'nobili parentele' [noble kin] proposed in the *matricula* there were no qualifying elements to define nobility, other than pure and simple family lineage; there was no reference to the necessity of being a citizen of Milan or of living within the city. Being in the *matricula*, all the Crivelli, including those who lived in the countryside around the city, who numbered many dozen, were all plainly Milanese noblemen. Obviously, this situation is not unique to the Crivelli. The majority of agnations of nobility stated in the document shared with the Crivelli a mixture of urban presence and strong and long-standing rural roots. This was the lowest and numerically strongest stratum of Milanese nobility: a ruralgentry who must not be confused with the seigneurial aristocracy mentioned above. Nobility was not a question of ownership of castles, exercising of legal jurisdictions, favours conceded to many throngs of *friends*. Nobility in this case meant, primarily, belonging to a lineage traditionally recognized as noble, and benefitting from some forms of fiscal and jurisdictional privilege that then translated into a separation with regard to the local communities. Nothing more than that. Of course, members of this level of nobility may have been slightly richer than the majority of rural dwellers; they may have held roles of relative power and prestige within the

25 On the *matricula* Leonida Besozzi, "La 'matricula' delle famiglie nobili di Milano e Carlo Borromeo", in *Archivio storico lombardo* 110 (1984), pp. 273–330; Federico Del Tredici, *Comunità, nobili e gentiluomini nel contado di Milano del Quattrocento* (Milan, 2013), pp. 279 onward.

local scene. However, this meant being in charge of agricultural activity, commerce, or the collection of duty and taxes, or indeed being a notary, a priest, or a teacher. Something quite different, then, from those Lombard gentlemen evoked by Macchiavelli.²⁶

Rural fringes of lesser nobility, which were numerically rather strong, were not typical only of rural Milan. The situation in the mountains and valleys of Lombardy is well-known. Clear traces of this rural nobility can be found elsewhere in the Duchy, and further research is needed to establish and clarify the characteristics of the rural nobility. The anomaly in the context of Milan, then, was not so much in the widespread presence of the nobility in rural areas, but that this was not a strictly local nobility. The inclination, to consider this nobility not as a village nobility but as an unequivocally Milanese nobility remained well-documented at the end of the fifteenth century. A Crivelli living in Parabiago, a small village within the countryside around Milan, on the strength of his surname was, according to the *matricula*, a Milanese nobleman just as much as a Crivelli living in the city.

This option was not taken for granted. In the alpine valleys of the Duchy, for example, from the fifteenth century, a purely local nobility appeared, which defined itself in terms that were entirely autonomous in comparison to the urban nobility.²⁷ Furthermore, in Milan, the nature of the *matricula* itself was regularly called into question, opposed by those no longer prepared to consider as members of the Milanese nobility those outside of the city. In 1470, for example, Milanese doctors were able to put forward in their defence the idea that citizenship and nobility were necessary attributes in order to carry out their profession, implicitly showing that the second was inseparable from the first.²⁸ As we shall see, they indicated the future direction. In the midst of the fifteenth century, the *matricula* however did not yet represent an outdated means of distinction, a fossil of a long-distant past. Concrete practices arose alongside this idea, first and foremost, the updating of the *matricula* itself. In order to highlight these practices, I shall presently examine a case that was discussed in the archbishop of Milan's court in which I shall succinctly demonstrate that it was even possible to refer to the *matricula* in a court of law.

26 Cf. Del Tredici, *Comunità*, pp. 271 et seq.

27 Della Misericordia, *Divenire comunità*, pp. 237–376 in particular.

28 Giovanni Sitoni di Scozia, *Collectanea de legibus nobilitatis* (Mediolani, 1724), p. 10.

Nobility in the Late Middle Ages: Three Examples from Milan

Any discussion on Lombard nobility in the late Middle Ages, then, is in no way a discussion on a sufficiently cohesive segment of the society of the time. Noble was a very broad term, applicable to individuals whose conditions were, in reality, very different, amongst whom it is an arduous task to find a common denominator. It could be argued that, in some ways, rather than highlight differences in *status*, the category of noble contributed to alleviating them. Piecing together the history of Lombard nobility, therefore, becomes a task of piecing together a history of differences. Once the weakness of the definition has been accepted, it becomes an exercise of painstakingly distinguishing elements that are not exclusively linked to the obvious and customary assessment relating to the specificity of the factors determining the social pre-eminence in a particular area. The nobles of the same, limited local context could be different, almost unrelated. I believe it is useful to illustrate some examples of these differences, in order to illustrate some of the points we have touched upon so far. I shall, therefore, briefly sketch out the profiles of Filippo Maria Visconti, Gian Tommaso Piatti, and Ottone Besozzi. These three men lived in the second half of the fifteenth century, even though they were of different generations. Without a doubt, all three of them were *nobiles Mediolanenses*, Milanese nobles.²⁹

The first of the three, who must not be confused with the homonymous duke, belonged to one of the most important minor branches of the Visconti house. His father, Gaspare, had been quite a powerful man at the time of the duke Filippo Maria. The family obviously had a palazzo in the city, but they also possessed something that a lot of other Milanese did not: castles in the countryside close to the capital. 'Our' Filippo Maria possessed the castles at Albizzate and Fagnano, and perhaps the castle at Cairate (30km approx. north-west of Milan); to his older brother, Pietro, on the other hand, came the large manor house at Cassano Magnago. The exercise of seigneurial rights over the villages in which the castles were located and the surrounding areas was closely tied to the ownership of the castles; rights that Filippo Maria, like his ancestors before him, did not consider to be derived from the feudal investiture of the duke. In his role as lord, this Visconti nominated *podestà* worthy of administering justice in the territories under his control; he highlighted their absolute

29 For Filippo Maria Visconti and Ottone Besozzi cf. Del Tredici, *Comunità*. On Gian Tommaso Piatti: Nadia Covini, "Essere nobili a Milano nel Quattrocento. Giovanni Tommaso Piatti tra servizio pubblico, interessi fondiari, impegno culturale e civile", in *Archivio storico lombardo* 128 (2002), pp. 63–155.

separation from ordinary justice, even with the use of force. As a result, his lands became impenetrable to officials of the Duchy, who, furthermore, knew very well that if they were to *impazarsi* [meddle] with the podestà, it could cost them their lives. In addition to being islands of jurisdictional power, the lands of Filippo Maria were also islands in fiscal terms, places in which the normal severe taxation that burdened rural Milanese villages was not applied. This was part of the protection that Filippo Maria guaranteed for his *homines* living within his jurisdiction, and this was, clearly, a form of patronage that was particularly agreeable with the peasants themselves. As a consequence of this, Filippo Maria had men from villages that were in theory beyond his jurisdiction presenting themselves before him and begging him 'lacrimosamente' [tearfully] to protect them 'da ruberie e violenze superflue' [superfluous theft and violence] (that mainly coincided with the ordinary fiscal regime of the Duchy). Filippo Maria accepted to 'servirli' [serve them], stressing that he did so 'senza alcun suo utile [...] anzi piuttosto con utile delle dette terre' [with no benefit to himself [...] rather with benefit to the lands in question]. The Seprio, the area situated to the north-west of Milan, was the traditional seat of this particular branch of the Visconti family. The possession of large areas of arable land in some of the most fertile areas of the State (Lomellina, for example), which were clearly of great economic importance was also attached to the jurisdictions of this territory. In the 1430s, Filippo Maria and his brother Pietro also held feudal rights over some important lands close to Lake Maggiore, and on the large village of Arona in particular. In 1439, however, the duke's desire to award Arona to his treasurer Vitaliano Borromeo won over the ambitions and rights of the two brothers, and Filippo Maria and Pietro had to renounce the village, never to regain it. This was the second major intervention by the Duchy on the life of Filippo Maria. The first had occurred not many years before in 1432, when, again at the duke's command, he had to marry the daughter of another of the great gentlemen of Lombardy, Rolando Pallavicini. The marriage followed Rolando's return to side of the Duchy and the end of his alliance with Venice. This was a marriage of purely political value in which Filippo Maria was given the honour and burden of becoming the incarnation of the State itself.

Within the scope of this overview, there is little else to add. Only to mention the early hostility Filippo Maria showed towards the Ambrosian Republic (1447); and thus the fundamental support, including military support, provided by him to Francesco Sforza. Widely recognized as an eponymous exponent of the vast Visconti family, and of the Milanese arch-Ghibelline faction, Filippo Maria also became a member of the most important organ of the state, the secret council. In the last years of his life, however, he maintained a certain

distance from Milan and its court. He mainly lived in his castles and dedicated himself to the construction of a new great manor—located at Fontaneto, in the countryside around Novara—which became his preferred residence. He obtained the office of *capitano del divieto* in Novara, an office linked to the repression of contraband in the area, which he carried out without forgetting to look after his own interests. In other words, he became the protector of all the smugglers, ensuring he received his own portion of that illegal trafficking. In 1480 the ban was lifted and attempts were made to take the role away from him. His response was to amass ‘gran numero di persone’ [a great many people] (armed), and he was awarded the title for life. He died in 1482.

Twenty years later, in 1502, Gian Tommaso Piatti passed away within the walls of the city that he had very rarely left over his lifetime. Gian Tommaso, who doubtless was identified as a noble by his contemporaries, appears to have led a very much urban life, part of the city’s branch of Milanese nobility, very distant from the experiences and way of life of Filippo Maria: Milan and its court were the horizon of his existence. A man of humanist culture, he worked for decades in key positions in the Sforza administration: firstly, in the chancellery of Angelo da Rieti, in charge of handling all the petitions that came in from around the Duchy, then in the chancellery of the secret council. The rural areas in which Filippo Maria Visconti governed over *homines* and castles was seen by Gian Tommaso with the rational and practical eye of a proprietor who wants to see the best returns for his economic investment. He very infrequently travelled there to collect rents and check funds. Nothing outside the city’s walls had anything to do with the political role he played inside Milan. He played his role in the frequent attendance at court and his work within the environment of civic public life. He was on many occasions the representative of the parish in which he lived, recognized, therefore, as a figure of authority by his neighbours, and elected amongst as trustees of the Ospedale Maggiore, the largest urban charitable organisation.³⁰ In his will, he left most of his assets to the Ospedale, but also provided a rich legacy to enable a certain number of

30 The governance of the largest charitable organisations and the most important confraternities appears to connote in Milan a class of exclusively urban middle aristocracy. Cf. Giuliana Albini, *Città e ospedali nella Lombardia medievale*, (Bologna, 1993), pp. 211–256; Marina Gazzini, “Patriziati urbani e spazi confraternali in età rinascimentale: l’esempio di Milano”, in *Archivio storico italiano* 158 (2000), pp. 491–514. These roles do not appear to have particularly interested the Milanese nobles belonging to the level of nobility of Filippo Maria Visconti: Edoardo Rossetti, “Una questione di famiglie. Lo sviluppo dell’osservanza francescana e l’aristocrazia milanese”, in *Quaderni di storia religiosa* 18 (2011), pp. 101–165.

adolescents from the city to have free education. In his death, as in his life, he was entirely Milanese through and through.

The horizons of our third noble, Ottone Besozzi, however, remained resolutely rural and outside the city. Son of a humble schoolmaster, Ottone was not a citizen of Milan and lived in Angera, a small rural village close to Lake Maggiore. He did not have an arranged marriage with the highest aristocracy of the Duchy like Filippo Maria Visconti, nor did he marry someone from a purely Milanese family like Gian Tommaso Piatti. He married an ordinary woman from Angera, Caterina da Cuggiono. What interests us more here, is that after a while, Ottone became fed up of her. He tried to annul the marriage in 1491, and he did so by indicating the disparity in *status* that existed between him—a noble—and his wife. The trial, which took place in the archbishop's court in Milan, transformed into a debate over Ottone's nobility. A nobility, it must be remembered, not within the context of his village, valid only within Angera, but a Milanese nobility, valid not only in his rural context but also in the city. Besozzi maintained that he was noble in that he was of the Besozzi lineage; such lineage was unequivocally held to be noble, both in Milan and in the countryside. For Ottone, the equation was simple: that he was a nobleman, and a Milanese nobleman, lay in the fact that he was a Besozzi. Reading between the lines, behind this chain of thought lay an entirely civic document such as the *matricula* of the *nobiles parentelle* who were permitted to enter the chapter of the cathedral of Milan. It was in this furrow that those who wished to contest Ottone's claim also moved. The Milanese lawyers of Caterina attempted to demonstrate just one thing: that Ottone was not a Besozzi. No emphasis was placed on whether or not Ottone was a citizen of Milan; they did not dwell, if not in a very vague manner, on his or his family's assets, on their lifestyle, on his job or that of his father. Instead, they investigated his genealogy, trying to demonstrate that Ottone's grandfather was not a Besozzi, but of a household that was not considered noble. Ottone got away with it. In the end, he established that his ancestor was actually a Besozzi, Beltramino. He was a priest, the rector of a humble country church, but a Besozzi nonetheless, and therefore to all intents and purposes a nobleman of Milan, as were his (illegitimate) heirs.

The Caesura of the Spanish Era

The presence of a duke and of a ducal court was not a matter of indifference in the lives of Filippo Maria Visconti and Gian Tommaso Piatti. Filippo Maria owed his marriage to Giovanna Pallavicini to the duke. Gian Tommaso played out his whole existence closely linked to the court working in the central

chancelleries of the State. Both experienced the way in which the princes elevated new families from cities within the Duchy or from outside. These new families took on prominent and prestigious positions in favour of the prince; the long-established families of Milan were called inevitably to compete with them (and often to clash). For Gian Tommaso this entailed dealing with people from the provinces or *forestieri* who crowded through the chancelleries. For Filippo Maria, amongst other things, it entailed making room for the ascending supremacy of a foreign family: the Borromeo.

From these three specific cases to any possible example, it is obvious that it is entirely impossible to consider the position and role of the nobility without taking into consideration the specific political context in question, and its ability to influence duties and possibilities. A constant relationship with the capital city was an inevitable fact for the leading gentlemen in the Lombardy of the Visconti and Sforza eras. From this relationship options and advantages were born: possible careers, material and immaterial resources, patents of legitimacy, and factors of social mobility. Certainly, this would be weighed up against specific ideological options and conditioning practices with regard to marriages, the transmission of assets and rights, feudal discipline, as well as with anti-factionary polemics and with the greater or lesser propensity of the dukes to value the element of nobility in the material constitution of the State. The weight of the capital was also present to the lower levels of the nobility, including the very humble level Ottone Besozzi laid claim to. In this regard, it is suffice to mention the emphasis with which the ducal court encouraged the local role of rural nobility, of men who held that one, intrinsic quality of being noble, not simply men legitimized through election by the community.³¹

At various levels and in various ways, Lombard nobility in the late Middle Ages held a significant relationship with the State. However, it is important not to consider this as a State nobility, or a nobility of the duke, or of the class in terms of role, legitimation, and identity, being primarily linked to the prince. The tendency within historiography to attribute the difference that existed between the nobility in the era of the dukes and the nobility in the Spanish era to the framework of the dichotomy courtesan/autonomy seems to me to be difficult to share. This argumentative line permeates the writings of Cesare Mozzarelli, who emphasized the way in which, during the Modern Age, when

31 Massimo Della Misericordia, *Como se tuta questa universitade parlasse. Le magistrature e la rappresentanza politica delle comunità nello stato di Milano*, in François Foronda, *Avant le contrat social. Le contrat politique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 2011), pp. 117–170.

the independence of the State and the closeness to the prince came to an end, the 'feature of the ideology of patrician nobility' became 'a self-organization of the ruling class that does not mirror, at least ideologically, its own authority onto anybody else's'.³² I would argue, however, that pointing out the innovative character of this 'bottom-up' legitimization of the noble class leads to the presentation of really a rather forced image of the ducal past, transformed in an age distinguished by the 'Prince's capacity of legitimating and organizing of the society and the *status* of each one of its members'.³³

Other areas, in my opinion, do merit greater attention. Firstly the waning influence of the great seigneurial and feudal aristocracy—of a particular form of high nobility—in the mediation between centre and periphery. Over the course of the wars of Italy, the undertakings of the leading gentlemen—especially their military and factionary facet—remained decisive in macro-politics and were not a marginal element in the conflict between powers that scarred Lombardy. None of the changes of sovereign that occurred in Cremona from 1499 to 1521, for example, happened without the intervention of the Pallavicino family, their soldiers and their men at arms.³⁴ The difference in scale that occurred with the entry of the Duchy into the enormous imperial body under Charles V, with everything that this really implied in terms of the power struggle, however, undoubtedly marked a definite change in prospective for the lords of the manors. Being able to count on a few hundred faithful, militarized as required, became less useful and less appreciated resources; a less defining factor in establishing the balance of local and hierarchical powers. The Affaitati family, wealthy merchants and financiers, became the most important family in Cremona, as they were able to offer to Charles V strength of their money and not that of their urban and rural followers, which they neither had nor desired. Clearly, this did not mean that the highest Lombard nobility in the Spanish era were precluded from the glories of a military career, perhaps even equipped with contingents of troops at their own expense. This role aimed at enabling noble families to gain the trust of the Spanish government rapidly, in order to 'lay claim to their own merits with Madrid in order to obtain adequate compensation'.³⁵ No longer did such force have the primary aim of imposing

32 Cesare Mozzarelli, *Il sistema patrizio*, in Cesare Mozzarelli, Pierangelo Schiera, eds., *Patriziati e aristocrazie nobiliari*, pp. 52–63, p. 58.

33 Ibid. p. 57.

34 Letizia Arcangeli, *La città nelle guerre d'Italia (1494–1535)*, in Chittolini, ed., *Storia di Cremona*, pp. 40–63, also relevant for the coming reference to the Affaitati.

35 Gianvittorio Signorotto, *Milano spagnola. Guerra, istituzioni, uomini di governo* (Milan, 1996), p. 133.

itself at a local level as in the past, often contributing to the construction of a close relationship between the urban and rural world.

The two-way relationship between cities and rural areas, which characterised the Lombardy of the Visconti and Sforza families and was full of political significance, was as substantially altered as the nobility itself. Obviously, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Borromeo family still owned vast territories thus retaining a specific political influence and was regarded with suspicion by Madrid. The power of their kindred, the large network of the family, and naturally their influential position in the ecclesiastical institutions, however, led to the fear that they could even 'take control of the state of Milan'.³⁶ By contrast, at the other end of the state, the possession of feuds in the rural areas for the Affaitati family in Cremona simply meant that they could guarantee their social status. The strong political relationship between the rural areas and the cities lost its meaning. Villas replaced castles; as venues for the *otium*, the villas could prepare for the *negotium* uniquely characteristic of city life.³⁷ Many eminent citizen resided with pleasure and for long stays in the rural areas so much so to cause serious problems with absences in the Lombard city councils. They did not take care of *friends* but of business, of the harvest revenues and of the grape harvest,³⁸ thus entailing a relationship with the rural areas that remained very strong but now merely for economic reasons. Unsurprisingly, the factions that had traditionally fuelled the 'osmosis between cities and rural areas [...] the capacity of the great families to bridge

36 Cesare Mozzarelli, *Nella Milano dei re cattolici. Considerazioni su uomini, cultura e istituzioni tra Cinque e Seicento*, in Paolo Pissavino, Gianvittorio Signorotto, eds., *Lombardia Borromaica, Lombardia Spagnola, 1554–1659* (Rome 1995), pp. 421–456, p. 441; Cinzia Cremonini, "La famiglia Borromeo nella prima metà del XVII secolo tra strategie locali e relazioni internazionali", in *Studia Borromaica* 18 (2004), pp. 13–61.

37 Cesare Mozzarelli, "Villa, villeggiatura e cultura politica tra Cinque e Settecento. Riflessioni sul caso milanese", in *Annali di Storia moderna e contemporanea* 3 (1997), pp. 155–171.

38 At the beginning of the seventeenth century it was usual for members of the council of Lodi to 'stay in their villas looking after their own affairs rather than participating in the management of the *res publica*': Maurizio Sangalli, *Una città nell'impero: Lodi e il suo ceto dirigente in età spagnola*, in Schianchi, ed., *Lodi*, pp. 103–168, citation on p. 116. For Pavia Chiara Porqueddu, *Istituzioni e società tra l'inizio del dominio spagnolo e la fine del dominio austriaco*, in *Storia di Pavia* 4.1 (Pavia, 1995), pp. 25–110, p. 52 in particular. For Cremona Giorgio Politi, *La società cremonese nella prima età spagnola* (Milan, 2002), pp. 32–33. Again in Cremona toward the end of the sixteenth century the country gentlemen 'were killing each other like wild animals' not for 'knightly things' but for questions of 'borders and waters': Federico Barbierato, *Al governo della città. Aristocrazia e istituzioni in età spagnola*, in Giorgio Politi, ed., *Storia di Cremona. L'età degli Asburgo di Spagna* (Azzano San Paolo, 2006), pp. 58–105.

their powerbases in the territories with the cities in many areas of the Duchy' disappeared.³⁹

The councils, once divided in factions, ultimately mutated in the Spanish rule into unified bodies. Divisions were still present in these bodies, however membership was no longer formally divided according to the faction to which individuals belonged. There were indeed differences and divisions ready to erupt into fights over precedence, on the praxis of the expenses, or even in violence inside and outside the council palaces (in Pavia they had to forbid explicitly the possession of 'offensive weapons' in the council).⁴⁰ Few families in Milan maintained a continued presence inside the town council, thus distinguishing themselves for their own power inside it.⁴¹ In Pavia the city assembly was dominated by some 'majors' who were conscious of their superiority in comparison to the ensemble of the councillors and warned of 'not tarring everyone with the same brush'.⁴² The presence of poor noblemen in councils was registered everywhere, as they were easily manipulated by powerful colleagues.⁴³ Profound conflicts could arise between those who were law professionals and those who were not; as happened in Lodi.⁴⁴ In Cremona, the former proclaimed their greater '*dignitas*' and requested to sit in different benches.⁴⁵ In Novara, the council was ruled 'by three or four people' and was scarred by the fight between Caccia and Tornielli who moved their respective relatives and friends in the assembly.⁴⁶ Even though the Lombard city councils of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could not be described as smooth, uniform, and egalitarian spaces, nonetheless by losing the factionary dimension of previous eras not only had they changed in form but also in substance. The sense of a cross-board connection among the elite of the city became stronger; the modes in which positions of excellence could become evident in the local areas became different. In 1403 the Vistarini and Fissiraga families had sworn an oath of loyalty to the Duke Giovanni Maria Visconti in a separate manner from the representatives of the city of Lodi, whose council

39 Gentile, *Aristocrazia signorile*, p. 137.

40 Porqueddu, *Istituzioni e società*, p. 48.

41 Donati, *Il patriziato*, p. 1048; Arcangeli, *Gentiluomini*, p. xv; Ead., *Alle origini*; Michela Barbot, "Il patriziato milanese: un'élite aperta? Ricambio politico e mobilità sociale nel ceto dirigente ambrosiano (secoli XVI–XVIII)", in *Cheiron* 41 (2005), pp. 71–99.

42 Porqueddu, *Istituzioni e società*, p. 49.

43 Politi, *La società*, pp. 127–144; Porqueddu, *Istituzioni e società*, p. 63.

44 Sangalli, *Una città*, p. 121.

45 Barbierato, *Al governo*, p. 84.

46 Anna Parma, *Dinamiche sociali ed equilibri di potere in una città del Cinquecento. Il caso Novarese* (Bologna, 1998), pp. 31–54.

was divided into two factions under control of the two powerful families. In 1535, Giovanni Vistarini and Antonio Fissiraga swore loyalty to the lieutenant of Charles v *together* with the other representatives of the city council, which was no longer divided into factions.⁴⁷ Of course, they continued to expect their particular *dignitas* and power,⁴⁸ but they did so in the ways allowed by the institutional framework that no longer foresaw formal divisions supported by figures outside and above the body of the city.

The Institutions of the City and Type of Nobility

It was mainly in these councils without opposing factions, that the new class boundaries and criteria of belonging to the nobility were defined in Lombardy in the Early Modern Age. It is worth underlining that being a noble under the Spanish rule was never exclusively about the exercise of civic offices. The prominence of some families—the Borromeo and Trivulzio families in Milan—related to their belonging to a political world that was no longer limited to the city or province borders but had an international dimension. Social climbing did not go through the urban titles but through different forms, such as a direct relationship with the court, the purchase of a fief, taking up an office upon royal mandate.⁴⁹ Nevertheless it is true that in terms of the (relatively) wide-spread middle-level, nobility and the government of the city ended up by interconnecting indissolubly; it goes without saying this entailed the obligation on the part of the nobility to keep an appropriate lifestyle in relation to marriages, management of the estates, dwellings and so on.⁵⁰ The possibility of joining the town councils and the prestigious professional colleges, such as those of the jurisconsults, which were strictly connected with the government, soon became reserved to the nobles. In turn, being noble became connected with being admissible, in respect to more or less difficult criteria, to one of

47 D'Arcangelo, *Lodi*.

48 Cf. Sangalli, *Una città*.

49 Signorotto, *Milano spagnola*; Cesare Mozzarelli, "Per la storia dello stato di Milano in età moderna. Ipotesi di lettura", in *Annali di Storia moderna e contemporanea* 6 (2000), pp. 585–604; Cremonini, *Il 'gran teatro'*; Ead., *Le vie della distinzione. Società, potere e cultura a Milano tra xv e xviii secolo* (Milan, 2012); Katia Visconti, *Il commercio dell'onore. Un'indagine prosopografica della feudalità del Milanese di età moderna* (Milan, 2008).

50 For an accurate observation on all the aspects of the lives lived *more nobilium* cf. in particular Chiara Porqueddu, *Il patriziato pavese in età spagnola. Ruoli familiari, stili di vita, economia* (Milan, 2013).

such bodies.⁵¹ In Novara, the council and the college of the jurisconsults 'are reciprocal guarantors of the identity of the nobility'.⁵² In Cremona, the very nobility of the Decurions, that is, of the council, decided 'not only who could become a Decurion but also who could be a noble'.⁵³ In general, it is possible to see a 'fusion between bodies dedicated to the ruling of the city and "type" of the class' which goes alongside an 'hardening of the requirements for the progressive diminution of the possibilities of accessing such class'.⁵⁴ Furthermore, in Milan, the criteria of access into the college of the jurisconsults, core governmental body of the city, did not significantly change in comparison to the Middle Ages. One had to be a citizen, a legitimate child, 22-year-old or above, and possess an education in law. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, it was also required that the applicants and their fathers did not hold humble jobs. The main change was that such condition of orderly civic eminence could be fully equated to belonging to the nobility. As of 1541, noble origins were an expected condition for candidates for the college of jurisconsults, and in a tautological manner: 'the co-optation into the college irrefutably attests to the nobility of the [...] college member and of his kindred'.⁵⁵

The above-mentioned Gian Tommaso Piatti would have not objected. Yet even at the end of the fifteenth century, the expression 'Milanese nobility' included strata of the society which were much higher up than the honourable civic nobility (as continued to be the case in the modern age) and others

51 For a very strong explanation for the gap shown between Lombard patricians in the Modern Age: Mozzarelli, *Il sistema*; Id., "Per la storia". On the specific case of Milan, with various positions see: Franco Arese, *La matricola del patriziato milanese di Maria Teresa*, in *Economia, istituzioni, cultura in Lombardia nell'età di Maria Teresa*, III, pp. 325–361; Donati, *Il patriziato*; Cremonini, *Il 'gran teatro'*; Barbot, *Il patriziato*. On the marked oligarchical character taken on by the councils of Pavia and Cremona at the end of the seventeenth century: Chiara Porqueddu, *Mercanti e patriziato a Pavia nella seconda metà del XVI secolo*, in Pissavino, Signorotto, eds., *Lombardia borromaica*, pp. 515–549; Ead., *Istituzioni e società*; Politi, *La società*.

52 Parma, *Dinamiche sociali*, p. 41.

53 Barbierato, *Al governo*, p. 85.

54 Mozzarelli, *Strutture statuali*, p. 62. It must be pointed out that the progressive assimilation to 'eminent class of the *comune*' beginning in the late Middle Ages ends up becoming an identifying amount for the rural lesser nobility, especially in the three alpine areas of the Duchy: Della Misericordia, *Divenire comunità*, p. 376 *passim*. On the oligarchic tendencies manifested in the seventeenth century by the governors of the most important rural institutions in the Pavia area: Porqueddu, *Istituzioni e società*, pp. 77–81.

55 Maria Carla Zorzoli, "Alcune considerazioni sui collegi dei giuristi nella Lombardia d'antico regime", in *Annali di Storia moderna e contemporanea* 7 (2001), pp. 449–475, p. 463.

which were much lower down (which stopped to be the case). Indeed, a few decades after the trial in which the Milanese nobility of Ottone Besozzi (1491) had been acknowledged as being dependent on his 'being Besozzi', nobody would have agreed to such idea. In the 1540s, evidence of this is found in the undertakings of the jurisconsult Edigio Bossi when he had to deal with the issue of nobility surrounding some supposed *nobiles* who resided in the village of Azzate, in the rural areas around Milan. Chance had it that these *nobiles* shared his very surname *Bossi*, which, as an aside, was indeed one of the oldest in the *matricula*. Egidio Bossi established that these families could not be considered as Milanese nobility but at best as local nobility within the boundaries of Azzate. In other words, 'being Bossi' was no longer enough. In order to be Milanese noblemen one had to be as Egidio Bossi, that is, a citizen and jurisconsult with responsibilities in the institutions of government. A few years later (1564) the canonical clergy of the cathedral of Milan submitted to Pope Pius IV—who was a Milanese jurisconsult—a plea that argued the obsolete nature of the *matricula* that ruled entry into the cathedral chapter. The plea did not seek to update the *matricula*, nor the addition of some surnames. The request was to annul it, as 'there is no longer need for it'. This was the most evident sign that the idea of nobility that the *matricula* had long-contributed to perpetuating, with its focus on households and not the city, had sunk into oblivion.

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People, Groups, and Institutions: Charity and Assistance in the Duchy of Milan from the 15th to the 17th Century

Giuliana Albini

The period spanning the late Middle Ages and the start of the Early Modern Era saw the presence of an interconnected system of assistance for the poor, in which individual initiatives and organizations created by institutions (State and Church) interacted and intersected.

It is clear that every society has to confront internal problems linked to the presence of weak elements, unable, primarily (but not only) due to their economic situation, to live in dignity. Historically speaking, however, it is rather difficult to define a state of necessity, be it material, physical, or indeed moral: the criteria and boundaries are rather ephemeral, the limits of what are considered acceptable standards of living vary greatly, and consequently, the point at which conditions fall below these limits and charitable assistance is necessitated, be it by institutions, groups, or individuals, also varies. It goes without saying that no measure exists to evaluate the state of poverty and need,¹ not even economic need, as these concepts are infinitely variable on the system of values of different societies: a person living in what we would today define as an unacceptable state of poverty, would be perfectly acceptable in a society at a different stage of economic development or with values pertaining to different civilizations.

This brief preamble serves as a necessary premise to deal with the subject here discussed: although the Duchy of Milan (and its capital in particular) have been proposed as a model (and in some ways ahead of its time) of a system of assistance that developed and became wide-spread over the course of the following centuries in a wider context, in this essay this system will not be presented as a clearly defined entity, but an extremely fragmented one (and at times not without internal contradictions). In the given context and the given period, the notion of charity cannot be understood using a snapshot approach that would help to clarify the difficulty society at that time faced in coping with

1 For a summary on charity in Italian society see the recent volume by Marina Garbellotti, *Per carità. Poveri e politiche assistenziali nell'Italia moderna* (Rome 2012).

the presence of need and of poverty. In order to gain a deeper understanding of poverty in context, consider that contemporary societies view poverty and illness as woes that must be overcome (albeit with profoundly different approaches in perception and in the search for a solution), the commitment of public authorities in this battle is not called into discussion, despite needing to deal with manifest inadequacies in terms of intentions and actions. This cannot be said of the time period in question, indeed, at that time, poverty and illness need to be understood within a Christian framework, that, in certain contexts, allows them even to be considered as 'privileged' conditions (the image of Christ is archetypal for both the pauper and of suffering) or as sought after states as a symbol of absolute devotion to the Christian message. At the same time, however, the battle against poverty is a duty of all Christians who are obligated to fight suffering with acts of personal charity; even though the help given to lift the needy out of their current state was always perceived as a moral and religious obligation, not as the right of the weak and an act of social justice.

It would, therefore, be difficult to give an overview on this topic for which, as Alessandro Pastore rightly notes, it is still necessary to clarify the meaning of terminology (and of categories of interpretation) that scholars² have far too frequently used forgetting the historical dimension and searching at all costs for continuity (or the Idol of Origins in Bloch's notion of memory).

The Intervention of Lay and Ecclesiastical Institutions in the Government of Charitable Organisations: Some Examples

Let us begin with the institutional organization and the largest urban distributors of aid: the large hospitals, accommodation facilities of extraordinary importance (particularly when administrative reorganisation combined with the construction of a new hospital) and, at the same time, centres from which many urban and rural hospitals were managed. A hospital, in that age, was not a place of medical care: or rather, it was only in the sense that disease accompanied poverty. The aim of hospitals, as defined in various deeds, norms, regulations, statutes, was to distribute all forms of aid (alms, care, comfort, food) to whoever needed it (women, men, children, the elderly). Clearly not all of those who were needy had the right to make use of the hospitals' services, especially

2 Alessandro Pastore, *Il problema dei poveri agli inizi dell'età moderna. Linee generali*, in *Povertà e innovazioni istituzionali in Italia. Dal Medioevo ad oggi*, Vera Zamagni (ed.), (Bologna, 2000), pp. 185–205.

those who were not part of the urban community. The *hospitalia* of the medieval tradition were organizations (often lay, but not exclusively so, there were hospitals linked to churches and monasteries, and hospitals acting on behalf of religious orders) who welcomed the poor, the sick, pilgrims, abandoned infants, but who also gave out alms. Places in which the act of charity was carried out par excellence, as Bonvesin da la Riva notes;³ places that frequently did not have canonical foundations, but certainly *loca religiosa* in which the ecclesiastical authorities (in particular the bishop) exercised protection and vigilance, as befits the traditional figure of a bishop as ‘father of the poor’.

Over the course of the fifteenth century, institutional solutions were sought (and variously enacted in different Italian states) to combat the numerous problems that had grown with the hospitals and that, in a sort of collective complaint, albeit with different tones, were denounced by all. The causes were many: bad management, embezzlement, inability to provide adequate solutions for new demands, increased numbers of those in poverty due to the economic situation. Solutions were found along different lines in different states to such an extent that it is possible to talk about the Tuscan model, the Lombard model, or the Veneto model.

One of the key characteristics of reform in the Lombard area was the intervention of lay authorities who, up until the fifteenth century, had not shown interest in the administration of hospitals (differing here from the situation in Tuscany). In the cities they began a process of rationalisation of the myriad of hospitals created, enlarged (and also destroyed) between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries: the creation of a unifying system of hospital management (that, it must be stated, did not include all organisations, but a large part of them) depended on the institutions and on the urban manager classes; many rural hospitals lost their autonomy and were incorporated into the large, newly created, urban hospitals. In the Lombard area, however, the power of the Duke was also relevant, predictably in the capital where the *ospedale de’poveri* was constructed: a grandiose building designed by Antonio Averlino, known as Filarete, and strongly supported by the Duke himself who imposed one of his closest associates in the hospital chapter.⁴ Less well known and perhaps less obvious, nonetheless of equal interest (and entirely in line with the

3 Giuliana Albini, *Bonvesin da la Riva, un intellettuale laico alla ricerca di una dimensione religiosa*, in Ead., *Carità e governo delle povertà (secoli XII–XV)*, (Milan 2002), pp. 20–53.

4 Giuliana Albini, Marina Gazzini, “Materiali per la storia dell’Ospedale Maggiore di Milano: le Ordinazioni capitolari degli anni 1456–1498”, in *Reti Medievali Rivista*, 12/1 (2011), <http://www.rmojs.unina.it>.

ecclesiastical politics of the Sforza),⁵ was the Sforza's intervention in other cities in the Duchy either through their own officials or in their role as intermediaries of the papal curia.⁶ The pivotal role of civil authorities could not occur outside the ecclesiastical context, the context in which the hospitals were located from an institutional perspective, indeed, the activities undertaken by the hospitals were born out of and sustained through the ethos of Christian charity. If the role of the bishops seemed, in some cases, to be obfuscated by the central role of the *Commune* and the Duke, it would be incorrect to speak of a secularization of the hospitals, for reasons that shall become clear.

An excellent example can be seen in the case of Piacenza.⁷ The process of hospital reform began in 1467, with the Elders nominating a commission charged with requesting a visit from the Bishop to the hospitals in the diocese, in order to verify the correct management of the hospital by the hospital ministers (who were accused of dissipating the property of the poor): an apparently autonomous action, that was in fact solicited by the attention with which the *Commune* had repeatedly affirmed its interest in the hospitals and its 'right' to request the Bishop to investigate the running of the hospital more attentively. On 30 April 1471 Bishop Giovanni Campesio summoned the local authorities and the hospital administrators. After giving a speech condemning the bad management of the hospitals, he obtained consensus from all present to proceed with the suppression of the existing hospitals and the construction of a new body that would incorporate all the hospitals into one (*unio et incorporatio dictorum hospitalium*). In his speech, recorded in a notary act that constituted the premise for the reform of the institutions, Campesio refers directly to the positive opinion held by the Ducal commissioner, Princivalle Lampugnano, without whose assent, he says, it would not have been possible to correctly approach any change within the hospitals (*sine cuius assensu rem huiusmodi aggredi honeste non licuisset*). This example highlights the complexity of the forces acting within institutions offering charity and assistance, which saw the necessity of a relationship between civil institutions (or rather the *Commune*

5 Giorgio Chittolini, *Stati regionali e istituzioni ecclesiastiche nell'Italia centrosettentrionale del Quattrocento*, in *Storia d'Italia Einaudi*, Annali 9, *La Chiesa e il potere politico dal Medioevo all'età contemporanea*, Giorgio Chittolini, Giovanni Miccoli (eds.), (Turin 1986), pp. 147–193.

6 Giuliana Albini, *La riforma quattrocentesca degli ospedali nel Ducato di Milano, tra poteri laici ed ecclesiastici*, in *Povertà e istituzioni*, pp. 95–109.

7 For this example see, *Cinque secoli di storia ospedaliera piacentina (1471–1971)*, Piacenza 1973. In particular, Pier Candido Mesini, *L'opera del beato Michele Carcano nel concentramento ospedaliero piacentino (1471–1472)*, pp. 209–233 and *Idem*, *La bolla "Ad ea ex apostolicae servitutis officio" di Sisto IV a conferma della soppressione di tutti gli ospedali della città e diocesi di Piacenza e della erezione del nuovo Ospedale Grande-8 ottobre 1472*, pp. 224–230.

and the Duke) and ecclesiastical ones, each one keen to have their own role whilst seeming to respect the rights of the other. The reform that took place in Piacenza (as with analogous reforms in other cities) needed to be approved by the Holy See in order to obtain the papal bull that constituted the actual act establishing the new hospital. The request to the Pope (as explained in the seal dated 8 October 1472) was made by the Bishop and with him also by the Duke of Milan and by the people of Piacenza: an inextricable institutional weave that is mirrored in makeup of the representatives in the chapter that managed the hospital, which remained the same for centuries after. Ten rectors, four of whom came from ecclesiastical institutions, representing the most important ecclesiastical institutions of the city (the Bishop, the Cathedral chapter, the chapter of Saint Antonino, the abbey of Saint Sisto and Saint Agostino) and the remaining six were nominated by the town community (from the town authorities and the colleges of arts). The role of the Bishop of Piacenza (who retained the right to receive the oaths of the rectors on entering the chapter) entered into a 'mixed system' that reaffirms the ambiguous nature of the institution.⁸ Another weighty intervention on the part of the bishop occurred in Piacenza (as in other cities in Lombardy) as a result of the Council of Trent, when bishops were required to promise to undertake pastoral visits to all charitable organisations, including hospitals. In his pastoral visit to the *Ospedale Grande* in 1569 the bishop Paolo Burali was received, according to the text, with respect by the rectors (*facta . . . per eos reverentiali salutatione*) and was led inside the hospital where he met the sick (women and men separated), the poor, the foundlings, the wet nurses who fed them; he examined every material aspect of the hospital (food, clothes, beds etc.) and of the church, which held a number of relics (amongst which a thorn from Christ's crown). The bishop's verdict was positive: the hospital was well-administered and well-governed, and it obtained the right to concede indulgences to those who visited the hospital on certain days of the year.⁹ In the *relationes* linked to visits *ad sacra limina* in Piacenza in the middle of the seventeenth century, analogous descriptions of the hospital can be found, it strove not only to welcome the poor and the sick, but also, as had become habitual and consolidated practice, to give out alms and to provide dowries for girls in need.¹⁰

8 Danilo Zardin, *Il Seicento*, in *Storia della diocesi di Piacenza*, vol. 111, *L'età moderna. Il rinnovamento cattolico (1508–1783)*, Paola Vismara (ed.), (Brescia 2010), pp. 55–101, p. 70

9 Franco Molinari, *Il vescovo Burali e l'Ospedale Grande di Piacenza*, in *Cinque secoli di storia ospedaliera piacentina*, pp. 231–243.

10 Danilo Zardin, *Il Seicento*, pp. 70–71.

In the time of Carlo Borromeo, or rather, following the Church's decision to launch much more decisive action in terms of controlling the hospitals and places of worship, events in Milan were not, however, so peaceful.¹¹ More than a century after the process of unifying the hospitals in the cities of Lombardy that came about in the apparent yet unstable guarantee of equilibrium and reciprocity agreed between civil and ecclesiastical powers,¹² the equivocal institutional definition of the hospitals became a source of conflict.

Indeed, it was in this environment that the ability of the ecclesiastical authorities (and of the bishop in particular) to affirm their own jurisdiction over the hospitals was called into play, whether in agreement or disagreement with lay powers.¹³ Even before the *Ospedale Maggiore* was founded these delicate relations can be clearly seen. In 1445 Pope Eugene IV (on the request of Filippo Maria Visconti, it is said, but there is no documentary evidence to support this)¹⁴ nominated a commission of ecclesiastics (coordinated by the Archbishop) who were to dictate new rules in all the hospitals in the Dukedom. There is no information regarding the results of such an operation; however it is certain that in the difficult moment of transition from the Visconti dynasty to the seizure of power by Sforza, that is to say, the moment when the republican model was briefly resuscitated, initiatives for hospital reform followed, almost in a competition between the Captains of the Ambrosian Republic and the Archbishop Rampini.¹⁵ The result was the action that allowed Francesco Sforza, later to take a leading role, to enter into the field, up until the papal bull of appointment issued by Pius II and dated 9 December 1458, which was itself the result of further negotiations by Sforza. However by this time the die had already been cast, and his success was evident in the recognition of the presence of a ducal lieutenant in the hospital chapter who held a position

11 Angelo Giorgio Ghezzi, "Conflitti giurisdizionali nella Milano di Carlo Borromeo: la visita apostolica di Gerolamo Ragazzoni nel 1575–76", in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, CVIII–CIX (1982–1983), pp. 193–238 (in particular the section: "I contrasti con il potere civile: l'Ospedale Maggiore e i pia loca").

12 Luigi Prosdocimi, *Il diritto ecclesiastico dello Stato di Milano dall'inizio della signoria viscontea al periodo tridentino (sec. XIII–XVI)* (Milan 1941, r.a., Milan 1973), in particular pp. 201–280.

13 Angelo Giorgio Ghezzi, *Il governo degli ospedali milanesi tra autonomia e controllo ecclesiastico (1558–1642)*, in *Lombardia borromaica, Lombardia spagnola (1554–1659)*, Paolo Pissavino, Gianvittorio Signorotto eds., (Pavia 1995), pp. 619–693.

14 Pio Pecchiai, *Vicende storiche dell'amministrazione spedaliere milanese. Contributo alla storia delle istituzioni pubbliche locali nei loro rapporti con la chiesa e lo stato* (Milan 1921), p. 69.

15 See Prosdocimi, *Il diritto ecclesiastico dello Stato di Milano*, p. 210 ss.

of superiority over the other representatives.¹⁶ This presence was the premise for an increasing tendency to consider the power of the Archbishop over the hospital purely as a formality, from the point of view of a predominantly civic organisation, without ever denying its profound religious inspiration or the contribution of ecclesiastical organisations in its birth and management. This is shown in the text by Gian Giacomo Gilino, representative of the *Ospedale* who, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, outlines the history and the administrative structures of the hospital.¹⁷ The same tendency was again affirmed over the following decades with the *Ordini al governo dell'Hospitale Grande di Milano*, a text prepared by the administrators from Milan in 1558, who diminish the role of the bishop in a very clear way and underline the 'civic' character: the true protagonists were 'the nobles of the city', from whom a representative of the sovereign was also chosen. The *Privilegium amplum* of Philip II in 1559 acknowledged this request, as 'he had succeeded in relegating to a secondary position every eventual form of interference by ecclesiastical powers in regard to the control of the *pia loca* of the cities'.¹⁸ Events developed in a very different way following the Council of Trent and the role undertaken by the two great Archbishops Carlo Borromeo and Federico Borromeo in the diocese of Milan. The question (as it was tackled as part of the reformation) referred back to the Council of Vienne in 1311 and to the obligation of bishops to oversee and check all the organisations that used their goods for the good of the poor: that is all the *pia loca* of differing foundations and institutional forms whose scope was nonetheless to provide charity and assistance. The Council of Trent, therefore, reaffirmed the right/duty of the bishop to visit charitable organisations including hospitals (including those that enjoyed ample privileges and exemptions).¹⁹ In Milan itself, between 1573 and 1576, open conflicts occurred between local administrators and civic authorities on the one side (who, in 1573, with the help of the governor of Milan, saw the figure of 'royal assistant' reconfirmed, the representative of the sovereign in charitable organisations), and, on the

16 See Franca Leverotti, "Ricerche sulle origini dell'ospedale Maggiore di Milano", in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, CVII (1981, 1984), pp. 77–113, to pp. 111–113.

17 Giuliana Albini, *La "Fundatio Magni Hospitalis Mediolani" di Gian Giacomo Ghilini: relazione amministrativa e libro della memoria*, in *Libri, e altro. Nel passato e nel presente*, Department of Historical Studies, University of Milan—Fondazione Mondadori (Milan 2006), pp. 77–109.

18 Ghezzi, *Conflitti giurisdizionali nella Milano di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 621–630 (cit. p. 630) et seq.

19 Angelo Turchini, "A beneficio pubblico e onor di Dio". *Povertà e carità nelle legislazione e nella postorale del Chiesa milanese in La città e i poveri: Milano e le terre lombarde dal Rinascimento all'età spagnola*, (Milan 1995), pp. 191–250, from p. 204.

other side, the archbishop and his apostolic envoy Gerolamo Regazzoni, who advanced urgent requests to visit *Ospedale Maggiore*.²⁰ It is not the intention of this essay to follow these events, however it is important to note that after a long period of time that alternated between moments of relative collaboration and moments of profound conflict, the clash was not resolved until 1614 when Pope Paul v confirmed that “il detto hospitale maggiore è luogo religioso e sacro”²¹ (which was later to be reconfirmed by Urban VIII). Once again, however, the administrators, with the Orders belonging to the government of the Hospital Grande di Milano (1642), reasserted previous regulations and provided incredibly detailed regulations for the distribution of assistance, even medical assistance, in evident contrast to the Episcopal authority.²²

The above-mentioned Orders were the result of a revision of previous legal texts, with regard to which the process of transforming hospitals into centres for medical care becomes prominent. In the mid seventeenth century, hospitals, especially in large conurbations, such as Milan, in turn were places to assist the poor but also, and in an increasingly predominant way, places for healing. In these orders a clear hierarchy existed amongst the personnel dedicated to curing the people inside the hospital, within which individuals with different competences, doctors, surgeons, nurses, had to provide for the alleviation of the physical and moral pain endured by the sick. All of this happened within a religious and spiritual perspective that called for exercising Christian charity towards the sick.

From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, charitable institutions, and the hospitals in particular, attracted the interest of the leading classes of the town. Throughout the Duchy of Milan, as elsewhere, the tight connection between people and families present in the civic councils and people and families present in the government of charitable organization was extremely visible. Passed on from father to son or kept within the same family, such positions represented ways of demonstrating social prestige and, in some cases, showing the new wealth derived (sometimes improperly so) from the management of their estates. In the mid seventeenth century particularly, the *pia loca*, although each one was managed and organized differently in a different way, represented a system within which the urban elite could look after the needy thus showing a disposition towards controlling and guiding society by

20 Ghezzi, *Conflitti giurisdizionali nella Milano di Carlo Borromeo*, p. 623 et seq.

21 Ghezzi, *Conflitti giurisdizionali nella Milano di Carlo Borromeo*, p. 688.

22 Giorgio Cosmacini, *La Ca' Granda dei milanesi. Storia dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano* (Rome-Bari, 1999), p. 109.

caring for the weak who were also potentially dangerous for the maintenance of the social order.

Legacies, Donations, Foundations: The Choices of Individuals

Archbishop Carlo Borromeo made a will in 1572 (and again in 1576, during the plague),²³ leaving the Ospedale Maggiore of Milan as the sole beneficiary,²⁴ despite, or perhaps motivated by, the oppositional nature of the relationship with the organisation that represented what was certainly the largest 'charitable undertaking' of the Duchy of Milan: to give an idea of the extent of the undertaking, the number of patients who passed through its doors between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries varied between 4000 and 7000 annually, and to that vast enterprise, the huge amount of external alms giving needs to be added.

The practice of leaving the Ospedale Maggiore as a sole beneficiary in a will is also attested in the unusual procedure enacted by a mute, deaf, and illiterate Milanese painter, Luca Riva, who made a will via a set of drawings. The public notary Pietro Antonio Calco managed to certify such drawings as a valid will, which is emblematic of the capacity of the institute of attracting donations.²⁵

In the same years, Giovanni Pietro Carcano, a wool merchant and banker, as well as heir of an old noble family left half of his estates to the *Ospedale*: thorough this generous bequest the building designed by Filarete was extended and completed, under the supervision of Richini. Another bequest of notice significantly marked the life of the Ospedale Maggiore: a silk merchant, Ambrogio da Rosate, donated the substantial amount of half a million *liras* to the organization, which in turn allowed the charitable organization to recuperate from the serious crisis it had entered due to the efforts against the plague and to other financial ordeals.²⁶

The actions of Borromeo, da Rosate and Riva belonged within the tradition of acts of charity, that, in the Lombard area, saw both lay people and ecclesiastics, when deciding on the beneficiaries of their worldly goods, leaving a sizable

23 *La Ca' Granda. Cinque secoli di storia e d'arte dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano*, Exhibition catalogue, Milan, Palazzo Reale, March–August 1981 (Milan, 1981), p. 103.

24 Turchini, "A beneficio pubblico e onor di Dio", p. 191.

25 *La Ca' Granda. Cinque secoli di storia e d'arte dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano*, Exhibition Catalogue, Milan, Palazzo Reale, March to August 1981 (Milan, 1981), pp. 111–113.

26 Giorgio Cosmacini, *La Ca' Granda dei milanesi. Storia dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano* (Rome-Bari, 1999), p. 108.

part of those goods to the poor, choosing (according to situation and contexts) from the innumerable charitable institutions active in helping the poor. Legacies came in a range of sizes according to the wealth of the bequether and his family network, they ranged from bequests of a small amount of money up to an entire patrimony of sizeable worth, even to the point of founding a new hospital or a new alms giving association. It was a widespread and common practice, especially for the upper-middle classes: a way of exercising charity (through the suggestion and preaching of the church) and of affirming social prestige. It was also a last attempt at reconciliation with God for a life that had not always been entirely Christian. Various definitions were coined in order to define this particular reason for charitable bequests: the *comptabilité de l'au-delà*,²⁷ the *calcolata devozione*,²⁸ expressions that also allude to the role held by the mercantile world (particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) which had a leading role in remarkable instances of such practices. Remaining within the context of Lombardy, an excellent example can be found in the eleemosynary *schola* established in Milan by the merchants Donato Ferrario and Vitaliano Borromeo, and, in a more general way, in the important role of Lombard merchants in eleemosynary institutions.²⁹

The very existence of the poor generated a moral obligation towards them, and, moreover, a sense of religious duty amongst the rich that could be undertaken through distribution of wealth and material goods rather than with a personal commitment. Charitable acts, increasingly managed by hospitals and confraternities, guaranteed the 'uomo caritatevole' (charitable man, as defined by Bonvesin de la Riva in the thirteenth Century), the possibility to help the poor in the best way possible. The intermediary had become the institution, who, whilst respecting the wishes of the benefactors, were responsible for selecting those who received help, for the actions necessary in order to help the poor (shelter, care, food, distribution of alms etc.), for continuity of care (and therefore the correct execution of bequests). Institutions achieved this through the creation and proper administration of land assests or good

27 Jean Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité de l'au-delà. Les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d'Avignon à la fin du Moyen Age (vers 1320-vers 1480)*, Préface de Jacques Le Goff, Collection de l'Ecole française de Rome n° 47 (Rome 1980).

28 Roberto Rusconi, *Da Costanza al Laterano: la "calcolata devozione" del ceto mercantile-borghese nell'Italia del Quattrocento*, in *Storia dell'Italia religiosa. I. L'antichità e il medio-evo*, André Vauchez ed., (Rome-Bari 1993), pp. 505–536.

29 Giuliana Albini, *Vite di mercanti milanesi del Trecento e del Quattrocento: affari e carità*, Introduction to Marina Gazzini, *"Dare et habere". Il mondo di un mercante milanese del Quattrocento* (Milan 1997), pp. xiii–xxiv (republished, Florence 2002).

management of financial bequests. If it is indeed necessary to underline that the system was founded on the good will of individuals, without whom the organisations would not be able to act or to survive, in need as they were of the continuous nourishment that came from wills and testaments (and also *inter vivos* donations), it is also true that the actions of individuals who did not go through an organisation became in some way diminished and was less certain of success. Actions with a social or institutional dimension increasingly tended to find support, both ideological and organisational, from civic and ecclesiastic authorities. The progressively increasing number of hospitals (of various origins and religious groups) and confraternities (who managed hospitals and assistance to their members or to the poor)³⁰ in urban environments went hand in hand with a reflection on poverty and assistance that resonated with men of culture and of the cloth. Amongst the many expressions of interest in these reflections, the role of the mendicant orders emerges, particularly that of the Franciscans who were active in the hospital reform and in establishing the Monti di Pietà. Their reflections do not show a calm and repetitive acceptance of the conditions of the time—the presence of poverty and the necessity for Christians to provide charitable aid—but a complex debate on questions that comprised the understanding of economic and social structures (and therefore the state of need).³¹ The presence of economic poverty became evermore apparent in these reflections, and with it the growing role of money as a means of providing aid. Charity was increasingly manifested in the form of ‘alms giving’, closely bound to the fact that money could guarantee the continued operation of organisations offering assistance (hospitals, monti di pietà) that, at this point, constituted the intermediary between ‘benefactor’ and ‘pauper’.

Increasing benevolence towards urban charitable organisations clearly emerges again in the history of some of the institutions themselves.

The confraternity of St Matthew’s Grand Hospital, also called the Pietà, in Pavia, in June of 1449, founded a new, unified hospital³² and administered it over the centuries to come. Designed and created with the purpose of administering the hospital, the confraternity initially gathered representatives from the social classes of urban management: long-standing houses of nobility

30 See the contributions in the special issue, *Il buon fedele. Le confraternite tra medioevo e prima età moderna*, “Quaderni di storia religiosa”, 5 (1998).

31 Giacomo Todeshini, *Razionalismo e teologia della salvezza nell’economia assistenziale del basso Medioevo*, in *Povertà e innovazioni istituzionali*, pp. 45–54, see p. 45.

32 Renata Crotti Pasi, *Il sistema caritativo-assistenziale. Strutture e forme di intervento*, in *Storia di Pavia*, 111/1, *Dal libero comune alla fine del principato indipendente (1024–1535)* (Milan 1992), pp. 359–40.

(like the Beccaria and Bottigella families), and families of more recent fortune and repute such as merchants and craftsmen, in addition to representatives from the professional world (notaries, lawyers, medical doctors), but also, however in limited number, clergymen and tertiary Franciscans.³³ This was commonly the case for confraternities who administered hospitals: membership of the confraternity was for life and the condition of entry was indiscutable good character (*boni sensus et bonae famae et vitae*). Membership was conferred through a process of co-optation: a potential member had to be presented by an existing member and approved by two thirds of the confraternity (whose number was never constant but varied between roughly 20 and 40 people). On acceptance, members were obliged to pay an entrance fee of 10 florins (later reduced to 10 lire) and a weekly payment of one groat; they had to swear to uphold the statutes of the confraternity and to act always to the confraternity's benefit. Out of the members, one had a prominent position, the minister, the others held offices mainly relating to the management of assets. What is of interest here is the way in which the brothers, in addition to their duty to the hospital (a complex undertaking, carried out with care judging by the care with which the documentation has been preserved), the members had to stand out among those making the Pietà as the beneficiary of their own wills. In 1461, Giovanni Sannazzaro, a merchant and founding member of the confraternity, left the hospital 4000 smq of meadow and, furthermore, bequeathed all his money and goods from his workshop to the confraternity: the hospital deputies ensured that a stock take was carried out and the moleskins were sold, gaining enough income to pay the hospital debts and to acquire land for the hospital itself. In the following years bequests, including the donation of alms for the dowries of girls in poverty, were scrupulously administered.³⁴ Sannazzaro was one of many brothers, such as Giovanni Antonio de Astulfis, Giovanni de Saliciis, Simone Aliprandi, Dalfino da Strata, Antonio Sannazzaro, Paganino de Nigris, Guglielmo Falavalli, Agostino de Fruscarollo, who made the confraternity the beneficiary of their wills within the first 20 years of the hospital's existence. This practice continued over the next decades; in the early sixteenth century amongst others Alberico di Castiglione, Giacomo Filippo de Poma, Bernardino de Laborantibus, Marco Guenzi, Giuseppe Salimbene can be named.

33 Renata Crotti Pasi, *L'attività dell'Ospedale San Matteo nel primo secolo di vita (1448–1548)*, in *L'Ospedale San Matteo di Pavia. Fatti e problemi del passato*, Dante Zanetti ed., (Pavia 1994), pp. 33–83.

34 Renata Crotti Pasi, *I benefattori*, in *L'Ospedale San Matteo di Pavia*, pp. 299–331, see p. 305.

In general terms, it can be said that it was the trust in the confraternity, a place of social gathering and shared religion, that made it almost natural for the members to leave their goods to it; the trust in the ability to correctly administer these goods was also widespread, although intermittent over the centuries.

In Milan in 1402, Ambrogio Basliani named the *Consortorio della Misericordia*, of which he was a member, as his sole beneficiary, in complete faith (as he himself declared) that the use that would be made of his bequest would be 'de eorum bonitate et legalitate confido tamquam homo qui sum de dicto Consortio et qui plene sum informatus de eorum bonis modis et operibus'.³⁵ Again in Milan, in 1424, Protaso Crivelli, a jurist and member of the *schola* of the *Quattro Marie*, named this alms giving organisation as his sole beneficiary: a substantial bequest that comprised considerable land and property that became part of the assets of the organisation.³⁶

Turning our attention to Pavia, Paolo Beretti della Torre (Minister of the San Matteo hospital between 1469 and 1475) made the hospital sole beneficiary of his will in 1477, with the instruction to distribute 25 florins annually to the poor from his own family (or others in poverty in the city). It is interesting to note that in his will, Beretti requested to be buried in the hospital church, and moreover that he instructed that a part of his bequest was used to fund the position of a permanent chaplain who would hear the confessions of the poor who sought assistance in the hospital, to mediate for them, and to instruct them "in fide catholica" for the benefit of their souls. The strong link between what we can describe as social motivation of bequests and a concept of faith clearly emerges. Alongside these two elements the importance of undertaking charitable acts, the exhibition of self and of mortal remains (with the instructions on place of burial), and the support of ecclesiastical institutions may be added without inherent contradictions or lapses in continuity.

For the most part, therefore, acts of charity towards the poor were not only provided *in articulo mortis*, but in addition (in the overwhelming majority of cases) the hospital or confraternity that was to execute the testator's intentions was specified. In the case of administrators of charitable organizations or *socii* of confraternities, it could almost be taken for granted that they would choose to make their will out to the organisation to which they belonged, however, the reasons that led to the flow of charitable donations were complex and lay in the intricate network that (directly or indirectly) linked individuals to organizations or institutions. It is clear that hospitals and *scholae* had

35 Antonio Noto, *Gli amici dei Poveri di Milano (1305-1964)* (Milano 1966), p. 34.

36 Noto, *Gli amici dei Poveri di Milano (1305-1964)*, p. 58.

peaks of great fortune and, often, moments of inevitable decline. The will of Bartolomeo Bagarotti, an illustrious citizen of Piacenza (1410) showed that even at the beginning of the fifteenth century the *Consorzio dello Spirito Santo* (which had been in existence since the thirteenth Century), was the executor of the legacies provided by him for the poor: almost 150 of the needy were provided for through the legacies, mainly women and predominantly widows and the unmarried.³⁷ In the course of the fifteenth century in Milan legacies in favour of the large eleemosynary consortia, principally the Quattro Marie and the Misericordia, predominated for a considerable time. Examples of this tendency can be seen in 1487 and 1488 when Luchino Piestrasanta and Giovanni Maria Corte, rich Milanese notables, named these *scholae* as their sole beneficiaries. Amongst the many other testators who left legacies to these organizations Tommaso Bossi and indeed others can be added to their number.³⁸ In 1514 Ottaviano Porro named the Quattro Marie as the sole benefactor of his large estate, at the same time much interest was shown in the Casa della Carità, to which, for example in 1515, Elisabetta Bossi left all her worldly goods with the condition that her legacy was used to provide dowries, to distribute goods to the poor, and also to educate the young in the art of grammar. The Casa della Carità increased in importance at that time: In 1509, Lucia Corti named as beneficiaries of her will the Casa della Carità and the Quattro Marie in equal measure;³⁹ Lancillotto della Croce in 1522 left one third of his goods to the Carità; it was again named in 1522 as sole beneficiary in the will of Leonardo Cortese.⁴⁰ A turning point can be noted between the fifteenth and sixteenth Centuries with the creation of new confraternities (such as the confraternity of Santa Maria presso San Satiro, the confraternity of San Giuseppe, or that of the Scurolo in Sant' Ambrogio) altered the dynamics of testamentary bequests with regard to previous decades.

Social distribution of wealth in favour of the poor was not, furthermore, the principal motive of the testator; the primary aim remained that of avoiding a death *ab intestato* which, especially with substantial estates, could lead to a dispersion of assets, torn apart through battles over their assignation. A lack of direct heirs, even more so, gave greater encouragement to finding a suitable destination for assests. A will also functioned as the document through which

37 Fausto Aosta, *L'assistenza. Strutture caritative, ospedali, confraternite, fondazione del Monte di Pietà*, in *Storia della diocesi di Piacenza*, vol. 11, *Il Medioevo. Dalla riforma gregoriana alla vigilia della riforma protestante*, Pierre Racine ed., (Brescia 2009), pp. 303–327, see p. 315.

38 Noto, *Gli amici dei Poveri*, pp. 184 onward.

39 Noto, *Gli amici dei Poveri*, p. 232.

40 Noto, *Gli amici dei Poveri*, p. 276.

the preparations of the testator's death were prepared; a symbolic moment that needed to be prepared for and planned to the finest detail. Bequeathing a legacy to the poor was, thus, one of a number of important symbolic acts contained in the will. The will stipulated and organised the presence of the poor themselves at the funeral, dressed in new clothes for the ceremony and provided for the distribution of bread, wine, clothes, and money during the funeral. Caterina Cantelli, who through birth and then through marriage belonged to two powerful families of Parma (the Valeri and the Cantelli) made a first will on 14 April 1496. Caterina gave limited attention to provision of goods and money for charitable organizations of the city; instead she gave great attention to the organisation of her own tomb, which she wanted in the church of the friars of Santa Maria dei Servi, in the *capella illorum de Valeriis* (constructed by her family of birth). What is more, she dedicated great attention to her funeral, which was to be accompanied by 20 poor people, dressed at her own expense. The funeral rites were to last for a long time: for one week 30 daily masses were to be celebrated, and bread and money were to be distributed to the poor. On the seventh day, 50 masses were to be celebrated; on the 30th day another funeral rite with 40 masses, each of these in the presence of the poor. In the following version of her will, the pomp and ceremony of her funeral rites was actually increased and, as a result, the number of poor people to clothe and provide with bread and money doubled, *pro anima ipsius testatricis*.⁴¹

Confraternities:⁴² Devotion and Charity

The way in which Early Modern societies reacted to phenomena related to economic and social problems was complex. Far from having developed a coherent form of public administration in order to help the poor, it was left up to individuals (and the institutions that those individuals made reference to) to choose the modality (be it individual or collective) by which help was offered to the needy. Theoretical reflections and government action (by the State and the Church) focused on problematic questions that offered no easy solution: who should be considered as poor? Who should be responsible for

41 Giuliana Albini, *Carità e assistenza nel Quattrocento parmense: le istituzioni, gli uomini, in Parma Medievale. Economia, società, memoria*, Roberto Greci ed., Storia di Parma, III-2 (Parma 2011), pp. 215–255.

42 See Marina Gazzini, *Le confraternite italiane: periodi, problemi, storiografie*, in Ead., *Confraternite e società cittadine nel medioevo italiano* (Bologna 2006), pp. 3–57, distributed in digital format by Itinerari Medievali (<http://www.itinerarimedievali.unipr.it>).

helping them? Which were the priorities that needed to be tackled?⁴³ In the meantime, the continuation of charitable acts, despite not being able to eliminate poverty, enabled the good will towards meeting the needs of the poor to be seen.

The imprint on society in these centuries left by the phenomenon of pauperism and vagrancy throughout Europe is clear,⁴⁴ as is the fact that the complex system of charity in place could not resolve the problems. The sheer extent of the phenomenon demanded, on many occasions, the attention of the authorities. In Lombardy,⁴⁵ the problem was tackled at an institutional level by various magistracies that came into being between the rule of the Sforzas and the Spanish in order to face emergencies linked to health and poverty (but particularly to mendicants and vagabonds). In particular, the *Magistrato di Sanità*,⁴⁶ which, over the course of the seventeenth century, created the role of Commissioner for the poor and for vagabonds, and which also authorized the creation of the refuge for mendicants.⁴⁷ The state, therefore, equipped itself with new institutions in order to combat the extreme and uncontrolled poverty whilst seeking to maintain control over the institutions that looked after the poor (*schole* and hospitals).⁴⁸ At the same time, the Church steadfastly

43 Marina Garbellotti, *Per carità. Poveri e politiche assistenziali nell'Italia moderna*.

44 Bronislaw Geremek, *Mendicanti e miserabili nell'Europa moderna (1350–1600)* (Rome Bari, 1989) and Brian Pullan, *Poveri, mendicanti e vagabondi (secoli XIV–XVII)*, in “Storia d'Italia Einaudi”, *Annali 1, Dal feudalesimo al capitalismo* (Turin 1978), pp. 981–1047.

45 Giovanni Liva, *Il controllo e la repressione degli 'oziosi e vagabondi'. La legislazione in età spagnola*, in *La città e i poveri*, pp. 291–332, that illustrates the rich documentation from Milan, in particular the outcry against vagrancy, that had already been documented over the fifteenth century (see Giuliana Albini, *Ospedali e società urbana. Italia centro-settentrionale, secoli XIII–XVI*, XLIV Settimana di Studi, Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa secc. XIII–XVII. Social assistance and solidarity in Europe from the 13th to the 18th centuries. Prato, 22–26 April 2012, F. Ammannati ed., (Florence 2013), p. 234).

46 Giuliana Albini, *Il controllo della sanità: gli ufficiali del ducato di Milano nel XV secolo*, conference paper, “La polizia sanitaria: dall'emergenza alla gestione della quotidianità” Università degli Studi, Messina (November 2008).

47 See the previously mentioned essay by Giovanni Liva on this complex question, once more, however, the whole process took place in close contact with the ecclesiastical authorities (see Turchini, “*A beneficio pubblico e onor di Dio*”, p. 238 onward). For a frame of reference for the Veneto area, see Marina Garbellotti, *Città, ospedali e beni dei poveri a Verona in età moderna*, in *Politiche del credito. Investimento, consumo, solidarietà*, Gemma Boschiero e Barbara Molina eds., Atti del Congresso internazionale. Cassa di Risparmio di Asti, Asti, 20–22 marzo 2003 (Asti 2004), pp. 325–344.

48 Angelo Turchini, *I 'loca pia' degli antichi stati italiani fra società civile e poteri ecclesiastici*, in *Fonti ecclesiastiche per la storia sociale e religiosa d'Europa: XV–XVIII secolo*, Cecilia Nubola, Angelo Turchini eds., (Bologna 1999), pp. 369–410, see pp. 382–383.

maintained its own role, intervening on entirely diverse and also complementary levels: theological reflection, council legislation, the daily practice of preaching, control of charitable institutions, and in a strategy of pastoral care that, in the times of Carlo Borromeo, shows some very clear trends. These trends can be seen in the territoriality of assistance (with an important role given to the parish), and, once again, the rationalisation of charitable actions, that are linked together with the desire to maintain control (which can be seen in the primary role of the bishop).⁴⁹

Without doubt, the Council of Trent had an immense impact on the revitalisation of the long tradition of confraternal organizations (often toward a more internalized and devotional dimension). The dimension of providing charity and assistance must not be overlooked, however, it is clear that, overall, the aim of achieving spiritual perfection prevails as the source of motivation pushing the faithful to join confraternities be they long-standing or (preferably) more recently created.⁵⁰

The complexity of the Lombard tradition of confraternities can be illustrated in a number of examples.

The uncertain definition of charitable organisations (civic and ecclesiastic) remains to the fore. This uncertainty became a source of weakness, allowing the protagonists of the various initiatives to find in some way (without giving rise to infinite litigation) institutions that privileged their representatives. One example will suffice. When the *Scuola* of S. Maria in S. Satiro was created in Milan in 1480, documents clearly show that the initiative was brought about by the faithful with the primary intention (in the spirit of charity) of taking care of the construction of the chapel (a well-known work by Bramante).⁵¹ Without any recourse to ecclesiastical authorities, the *confratres* turned to the Sforza dukes Bona and Galeazzo Maria to seek their authorisation: '... perché senza licentia et dispensatione de vostre excell.me Signorie non presumiamo fare dicta scolla et congregazione...' [as without license and dispensation from Your Excellent Lord we do not presume to create such *schola* and congregation].⁵²

49 Cf. Turchini, "A beneficio pubblico e onor di Dio", p. 197 onward.

50 Danilo Zardin, *Riscrivere la tradizione. Il mondo delle confraternite nella cornice del rinnovamento cattolico cinque-seicentesco*, in *Studi confraternali: orientamenti, problemi, testimonianze*, Marina Gazzini ed., (Florence 2009), pp. 167–213.

51 For questions of space, it is not possible to reflect on the close link between art patronage and confraternities. For a recent overview of the problems, see Ludovica Sebreghondi, *Arte confraternale*, in *Studi confraternali: orientamenti, problemi, testimonianze*, pp. 337–357.

52 *Statuti dei luoghi pii elemosinieri amministrati dall'ente comunale di assistenza di Milano*, Antonio Noto ed., (Milan 1948), p. 46.

The system, therefore, if one can indeed speak of a system, was anything but coherent and continued to plunge its roots into the high medieval tradition. There was no great institutional innovation more a continuous reinterpretation of the tradition, particularly in regard to the new religious climate that was developing over the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries. Some charitable institutions, such as the Misericordia in Milan, continued their activity without interruption. The 'Quinternetto delli poveri' from 1587 lists more than 1000 individuals (from 715 family units) resident in the Porta Ticinese district who received help from the organisation. 1600 'segni' were distributed to these individuals, entitling the recipients to receive foodstuffs (in this case loaves made with wheat, loaves made with mixed flour, and rice). This list in itself, and indeed the place in which it is housed (the Archivio Diocesano and not the archive of charitable organizations),⁵³ again demonstrates the direct interest the Church in Milan had in the management of the resources pertaining to civic *schole*, taking action that had not been seen in previous centuries. At times this intervention was such that the original statutes of the institutions were revised, and the aims of the *schole* and hospitals were altered in a significant way. A case in point is the Pagnottella in Milan, a charitable institution that, following the obligations imposed on the apostolic representative's visit in 1576, was directed towards being highly selective over those in their care and was obliged to verify the genuine state of necessity of its patients.⁵⁴ The aim of this selection process was to separate those in poverty who were worthy of help from those in poverty who were not worthy of help. Behind the apparent continuity inherent in the history of confraternities and hospitals,⁵⁵ significant changes can be noted that, particularly in the second half of the sixteenth century, altered the face of confraternities.

53 Marco Bascapè, Daniela Bellettati, *Il "Quinternetto delli poveri" del luogo pio della Misericordia (1587)*, in *Spicilegium Mediolanense. Studi in onore di mons. Bruno Maria Bosatra*, Fabrizio Pagani ed., Milan, Centro Ambrosiano, 2011 (Ricerche storiche sulla Chiesa Ambrosiana, XXIX), pp. 125–156.

54 Marco Bascapè, *Per un nuovo approccio alla storia dei luoghi pii milanesi*, in *Milano. Alle radici della carità*, Lucia Aiello, Marco Bascapè, Sergio Rebora eds., (Milan 2008), pp. 17–27, see p. 25.

55 See *Studi confraternali: orientamenti, problemi, testimonianze*, and also Danilo Zardin, *Riscrivere la tradizione. Il mondo delle confraternite nella cornice del rinnovamento cattolico cinque-seicentesco*. With reference to the Lombard area, the essay by Marina Gazzini provides an overview: Marina Gazzini, *L'associazionismo religioso laicale a Milano dalla tradizione medievale all'età di Carlo Borromeo*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo: istituzioni, religione e società agli inizi del Cinquecento*, Alberto Rocca, Paola Vismara eds., Biblioteca Ambrosiana di Milano (Milan 2012) (Studia borromaica 26), pp. 269–289.

In the Lombard area, the *scholae* were extremely complex organizations, at the same time as being clearly seen as a means of bringing about social and religious intergration, they were also the means of creating dialogue with society in all its complexity: that is to say, through the network of membership created by confraternities, who were principally lay, this network was, in its essence, strongly religious and devotional.⁵⁶

Considering this indiscutable religious dimension, that was reinforced in the Early Modern era, the confraternities undoubtedly operated in the specific dimension of providing charitable aid. As Thomas Frank has recently highlighted, the binomial pairing 'confraternity and assistance' can be understood in two ways, that is, as 'assisting confreres' and 'confraternal assistance'.⁵⁷ Indeed, a collective aim of all the confraternities, even those of a strongly devotional character, albeit to varying levels and degrees, was to help one's neighbour. This tenet, however, was upheld in two ways, firstly with regard to helping fellow *socii*, and secondly (but not however, necessarily to a lesser extent) to help those outside the confraternity. Some confraternities (as we have seen in the case of Pavia) were created and developed with the explicit aim of managing charitable institutions, in particular, hospitals. In these cases, it is frequently difficult to distinguish the confraternal groups from the authorities governing a hospital. An interesting illustration of this occurred in Lodi,⁵⁸ where, in 1466 a *societas* was created and its members (*confratres*) delineated their own *status* and functions in the statutes of the organisation. Although these statutes have been defined as a form of administrative council charged with the administration of the hospital and its assets, it remains noteworthy that the majority of statutes are dedicated to advising peace between members, and alongside these statutes are others stating the responsibility of members towards the commemoration of deceased confreres and benefactors: typical features in all confraternal groups.

This multiplicity of aims of the *scholae* (both internal and external) is one of the characteristic features. Even when limiting the discussion to the charitable dimensions of confraternities (as in the case of this essay), the sheer range of activities and the broad approach adopted by these groups in order to fulfil their charitable aims in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period is worthy

56 Roberto Rusconi, *Confraternite, compagnie e devozioni*, in *Storia d'Italia Einaudi, Annali* 9: *La Chiesa e il potere politico dal medioevo all'età contemporanea*, pp. 467–506.

57 Thomas Frank, *Confraternite e assistenza*, in *Studi confraternali: orientamenti, problemi, testimonianze*, pp. 217–238.

58 Frank, *Confraternite e assistenza*, pp. 232–234; on the hospital in Lodi, see G. Albini, *Città e ospedali nella Lombardia medievale*, Bologna 1993, pp. 103–127.

of note. The situation in Milan has been a particular focus for scholars due to the wealth of documentation that has been preserved that has led to extensive, however not exhaustive, study. The study of the complexity of the confraternities present in Milan is, therefore, highly significant, not least for the evident specificity of that city, being the capital of a large dominion.⁵⁹ In the course of the fifteenth century, the largest confraternities developed a prominent role amongst the *schole* of Milan: the Consorzio of the Misericordia, the *schola* delle Quattro Marie, the charitable organisation of the Carità, the Consorzio della Divinità and the Consorzio dell'Umiltà.⁶⁰ Together these confraternities contributed to the management of the Ospedale Maggiore, through a complex system of electing representatives that led to the creation of a very compact group of Milanese aristocratic families who controlled the management of the main eleemosynary societies of the city and also the Ospedale Maggiore.⁶¹ Their aims were wide-ranging and can be summarised as acts of benevolence undertaken by members (through the administration of donated goods) that all Christians were bound to in order to receive eternal life. The introduction to the statutes of the Consorzio of the Misericordia written in 1422 attest to this aim: '... Quod nos, sotii et conservatores domus Misericordie Mediolani volentes, ut pietatis et misericordie opera de quibus in extremo Dei iudicio sumus rationem reddituri, ad honorem Dei et totius curie celestis nec non pauperum utilitatem peragere ut asequi possimus fructum illius benedictæ vocis in trono sedentis: 'Venite benedicti patris mei, exurivi et dedistis michi manducare, sitiivi et dedistis michi bibere, nudus eram et coperuistis me etc.'⁶²

The aims of the *schole* can, therefore, be seen in the wider perspective of the practice of charitable work; however, the nature of this practice differed between organisations. Within the broad context of charity, the confrarie

59 Turchini, "A beneficio pubblico e onor di Dio", pp. 214–15; provides a list from the last decades of the sixteenth century showing around 40 confraternities, all well-documented, particularly with wills. See Noto, *Gli amici dei poveri di Milano*.

60 The bibliography on the topic is extensive especially because of the rich tradition of studying the documentation held in the archive of the eleemosynary organizations (currently the Archivio ASP Golgi Redaelli in Milan).

61 For reflections and evaluations of the relations between these groups with political powers and with the Church in Milan, see, for the second half of the fifteenth century, Giuliana Albini, *Gli "amministratori" dei luoghi pii milanesi nel '400: materiali per future indagini*, in Ead, *Città e ospedali*, pp. 211–256; for the beginning of the sixteenth century see, Marco Bascapé, *I luoghi pii milanesi ai tempi delle Guerre d'Italia. Finalità caritative, istanze religiose e funzioni civiche*, in *Prima di Carlo Borromeo*, pp. 321–366.

62 *Statuti dei luoghi pii elemosinieri amministrati dall'ente comunale di assistenza di Milano*, p. 11.

could find a specialised niche and identify precise aims for their undertakings that ranged from markedly devotional objectives to exclusively charitable actions. In many cases, however, a society's aims can appear as an unclear and incomprehensible miscellany of activities.

The launch of the Milanese confraternity of Santa Corona (founded in 1497 in Milan with clear moralising objectives),⁶³ integrated into the aristocracy of the city, was characterised by the marked impact of Stefano da Seregno, a Dominican who supported the creation of a female group (St. Caterina of Siena) made up of tertiaries *de poenitentia*. Supported in the first instance by the ducal powers, and later by the ecclesiastical authorities, the society welcomed in swathes of the city's elite, and, not without overcoming notable difficulties, held an important role in the confraternal world of Milan over the sixteenth century. The confraternity's aims may not seem homogeneous: at one extreme they specialized in the medical and pharmaceutical field, very uncommon for this time, and undertook home visits to the sick as well as having close ties with the Ospedale Maggiore; at the other end of the spectrum, however, the statutes impose spiritual practices and the acquisition of cultural knowledge (that led to the creation of a sizable bibliographical heritage). These seemingly uncoordinated aims combined with relatively strong emphasis on a cogent rule of the order, which was strengthened over the course of the sixteenth century, and marked devotion to the cult of the Body of Christ. At the same time, a *schola* was created in the church of S. Giorgio in Palazzo that honoured the sacred body of Christ:⁶⁴ a very different confraternity in terms of origin and locality (it operated on a parochial level),⁶⁵ and also in social composition bound (as were many others) in a communality of devotion to the figure of Christ.

Devotion to the figure of Christ (moreover to the image of the dead Christ, the Pietà) was a contributing factor to the vast project of creating the Monti di Pietà,⁶⁶ which was born out of a long journey of reflection undertaken

63 See Marina Gazzini, "Scuola, libri e cultura nelle confraternite milanesi fra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna", in *La Bibliofilia*, year CIII (2001), n. 3, pp. 215–261, also in Ead, *Confraternite e società cittadina nel medioevo italiano* (Bologna 2006), pp. 279–330, from p. 298 onward.

64 Danilo Zardin, "Solidarietà di vicini. La confraternita del Corpo di Cristo e le compagnie devote di S. Giorgio al Palazzo tra Cinque e Settecento", in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, s.11, vol. IX, CXVIII (1992), pp. 361–404.

65 At the beginning of the seventeenth century parish level confraternities with eucharistic aims had become widespread, particularly at the request of the Archbishop Carlo Borromeo. See Zardin, *Solidarietà di vicini*, p. 363 ss.

66 For an overview of the foundation of Monti in the Lombard area, see G. Albini, *Sulle origini dei Monti di Pietà nel ducato di Milano e il denaro e i poveri. L'istituzione dei Monti di*

principally by Fransiscans on the use of money,⁶⁷ and its use in terms of Christian *caritas*. In the standards, representations, and icons that depict the Monti, images of the dead Christ can frequently be found. For the 1528 procession of the Monte in Milan, for example, the presidents to reproduce a new image in which Bernardino da Feltre, creator of the Monti, held in his right hand a dish of money in which a standard was added with the image of the dead Christ and the words 'Habe illius curam', as an invitation to take care of the needy.⁶⁸ A similar example from the sixteenth century can be found in the gonfalone designed for the annual collection of money to help the Monte in Milan. As was typical for such artifacts, the Monte is depicted as a small hill covered in coins with the figure of the dead Christ above. The faithful are depicted at the foot of the hill, with men on one side and women on the other, a design that can be considered almost a topos in representing members of confraternities. In this particular case, however, another detail has been added: the details image of the officials of the Monte who are depicted in various activities such as writing, welcoming citizens who are pledging goods (jewelry, clothes, utensils), or distributing money. The lively description of the life of the confraternity recreates a vivid image of the strong ties between daily life and the awareness of what is happening around them and the the devotional and religious aspect of the Monte.⁶⁹ The statutes of the Monti, which generally accompanied their creation or followed shortly afterwards, clearly defined organizational procedures and the processes by which the electoral system for members and the roles of members should be established. Once again, as with the hospitals and the confraternities, towards the end of the fifteenth century a marked prevalence of nobility and aristocratic business classes can be seen,⁷⁰ and, at the same time, the presence of the same family groups that were already heavily involved in the running of other charitable organizations of the city.⁷¹

Pietà alla fine del Quattrocento, in Ead., *Carità e governo delle povertà (secoli XII–XV)*, Milan 2002, pp. 285–337.

67 Giacomo Todeschini, *I mercanti e il tempio. La società cristiana e il circolo virtuoso della ricchezza tra Medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna 2002) and Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Il denaro e la salvezza. L'invenzione del Monte di Pietà* (Bologna 2001).

68 Muzzarelli, *Il denaro e la salvezza*, p. 137 e fig. 13.

69 Muzzarelli, *Il denaro e la salvezza*, p. 134.

70 Renata Crotti Pasi, *La fondazione del Monte di Pietà di Pavia: un intervento assistenziale mirato?*, in Bernardino da Feltre a Pavia: *la predicazione e la fondazione del Monte di Pietà*, atti della giornata di Studio, Pavia 30 ottobre 1993 (Pavia 1994), pp. 63–11.

71 Albini, , *Gli "amministratori" dei luoghi pii milanesi nel '400*.

The confraternal context is visible in many situations in which societies were founded specifically in order to manage the Monte di Pietà (both within the State of Milan and beyond). This situation can be seen in Crema and in Brescia,⁷² and was widespread in the Veneto region.⁷³ The Monte in Cremona⁷⁴ was run by the confreres of the *Consortium Sanctae Pietatis*, which obtained a papal bull in 1492 from Alexander VI containing many concessions, including the ability to elect a confessor, plenary death bed indulgences, and other indulgences. This confraternity was then absorbed into the confraternity of the Immacolata Concezione following which it presumably took the title of San Bernardino, which can be found in documents from the end of the sixteenth century.

It is clear, therefore, that at the end of the fifteenth century many people believed (due in particular to the preachings of the Franciscan Observance) in the inherent goodness of creating an organisation, the Monte di Pietà, that, collecting money in the name of Christian charity and using a system of pawn-brokering, was able to lend money, for a small amount of interest. Far from being considered an element that was extraneous to the charitable system, the Monte also shared both the procedures and the idealistic and religious premises that can be found in confraternal organizations, however, adding to the already numerous aims of the confraternities, the Monte's own aim of loan distribution through the pledge of goods.

For centuries, then, men and women, be they simply benefactors or members of confraternities or *schole*, contributed to maintaining an uninterrupted chain of charity, in the spirit of Christianity, unbroken by devotional practices or by the desire to affirm one's own social prestige. For many of these organizations, the construction of their history comes from the records of these benefactors. The hospitals and eleemosynary organizations in Lombardy attest to this memory in rich collections of paintings that are both a memory and celebration of individuals and a memento of the organizations themselves.⁷⁵

72 Daniele Montanari, *I Monti di pietà della Lombardia (secoli XV–XVIII). Prime riflessioni*, in "Annali di storia moderna e contemporanea", II (1996), pp. 9–43.

73 Brian Pullan, *La politica sociale della Repubblica di Venezia (1500–1620)* (Rome 1982), vol. II, *Gli Ebrei veneziani e i Monti di Pietà*.

74 Adelaide Ricci, *Cremona, il suo primo Monte e il "Consortio de la Sancta Pietà"*, in *Studi sui Monti di pietà*, Mauro Carboni and Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli eds., (Bologna 2009), pp. 67–100; distributed in digital format by "Reti Medievali", www.retimedievali.it.

75 An example can be seen for Milan in, *La Ca' Granda. Cinque secoli di storia e d'arte dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano*, Milan 1981 and the volume *La generosità e la memoria. I luoghi pii elemosinieri di Milano e i loro benefattori attraverso i secoli*, Ivano e Riboli, Marco Bascapé, Sergio Rebora eds., (Milan 1999).

One of the distinctive characteristics of the ways in which assistance was provided to the poor in those centuries, not the only characteristic but one of great relevance, can be found in the impossibility of separating the history of individuals from that of the institutions (that were religious in their inspiration and modes of expression yet were both civic and ecclesiastic in their organisation and legal definition). Confraternities and hospitals (be they large or small) were characterised by strong links and shared participation that forged these institutions into a mediating role and a vehicle for the complex and difficult relationship between wealth and poverty.

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